# THE REMEDY FOR THOSE VICTIMIZED BY SINS

# الدَّاءُ وَالدَّوَاءُ

IBN AL-QAYYIM

IIPH الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي

IN THE NAME OF

# ALLAH

THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE, ALL-MERCIFUL

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Notes

# Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart

| Arabic script | Pronunciation | Transliterated form |
|---|---|---|
| أ | short ‘a’, as in *cat* | a |
| آ — ى | longer ‘a’, as in *cab* (not as in *cake*) | â |
| ب | /b/ as in *bell*, *rubber* and *tab* | b |
| ت | /t/ as in *tap*, *mustard* and *sit* | t |
| ة | takes the sound of the preceding diacritical mark sometimes ending in h (when in pausal form): ah, ih or ooh; or atu(n), ati(n) or ata(n) when uninterrupted | h or t (when followed by another Arabic word) |
| ث | /th/ as in *thing*, *maths* and *wealth* | th |
| ج | /j/ as in *jam*, *ajar* and *age* | j |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ح | a ‘harsher’ sound than the English initial /h/, and may occur medially and in word-final position as well | ḥ |
| خ | as in *Bach* (in German); may occur initially and medially as well | kh |
| د | /d/ as in *do*, *muddy* and *red* | d |
| ذ | as in *this*, *father* and *smooth* | dh |
| ر | /r/ as in *raw*, *arid* and *war*; may also be a rolled ‘r’, as pronounced in Spanish | r |
| ز | /z/ as in *zoo*, *easy* and *gaze* | z |
| س | /s/ as in *so*, *messy* and *grass* | s |
| ش | as in *ship*, *ashes* and *rush* | sh |
| ص | no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /sw/ or /s/ farther back in the mouth | ṣ |
| ض | no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /d/ farther back in the mouth | ḍ |
| ط | no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /t/ farther back in the mouth | ṭ |
| ظ | no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing ‘the’ farther | dh |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | back in the mouth | |
| ع | no close equivalent in English: a guttural sound in the back of the throat | ‘ |
| غ | no close equivalent in English, but may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like the French /r/ in ‘rouge’ | gh |
| ف | /f/ as in *fill*, *effort* and *muff* | f |
| ق | no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /k/ farther back in the mouth | q |
| ك | /k/ as in *king*, *buckle* and *tack* | k |
| ل | /l/ as in *lap*, *halo*; in the word Allah, it becomes velarized as in *ball* | l |
| م | /m/ as in *men*, *simple* and *ram* | m |
| ن | /n/ as in *net*, *ant* and *can* | n |
| هـ – ه – ه | /h/ as in *hat*; unlike /h/ in English, in Arabic /h/ is pronounced in medial and word-final positions as well | h |
| و | as in *wet* and *away* | w |
| و | long ‘u’, as in *boot* and *too* | oo |
| ي | as in *yard* and *mayo* | y |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ي | long ‘e’, as in *eat*, *beef* and *see* | ee |
| ء | glottal stop: may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like ‘t’ in the Cockney English pronunciation of *butter*: *bu’er*, or the stop sound in *uh-oh!* | ’<br>(omitted in initial position) |

## Diphthongs

| Arabic script | Pronunciation | Transliterated form |
|---|---|---|
| أو، ◌َ و | long ‘o’, as in *owe*, *boat* and *go* | au, aw |
| أي، ◌َ ي | long ‘a’, as in *aid*, *rain* and *say* | ay, ai, ei |

## Diacritical marks (*tashkeel*)

| Name of mark | Pronunciation | Transliterated form |
|---|---|---|
| ◌َ<br>fatḥah | very short ‘a’ or schwa (unstressed vowel) | a |
| ◌ِ<br>kasrah | shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel) | i |
| ◌ُ<br>ḍammah | shorter version of oo | u |
| ◌ّ<br>shaddah | a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled | double letter |
| ◌ْ | no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word | absence of vowel |

sukoon

# Arabic honorific symbols

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (ﷻ) | *Subḥânahu wa Ta'âlâ* | The Exalted |
| (ﷺ) | *ṣalla Allâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* | Blessings and peace be upon him |
| (ﷺ) | *'alayhi as-salâm* | May peace be upon him |
| (ﷺ) | *raḍiya Allâhu 'anhu* | May Allah be pleased with him |
| (ﷺ) | *raḍiya Allâhu 'anhâ* | May Allah be pleased with her |
| (ﷺ) | *raḍiya Allâhu 'anhumâ* | May Allah be pleased with both of them |
| (ﷺ) | *raḍiya Allâhu 'anhum* | May Allah be pleased with all of them |
| (ﷺ) | *raḍiya Allâhu 'anhunna* | May Allah be pleased with all of them (females only) |

# Hadith grade terms in this book

| | |
|---|---|
| Sound: | *ṣaḥeeḥ* |
| Reliable: | *ḥasan* |
| Weak: | *ḍa'eef* |
| Odd: | *ghareeb* |
| Authentic: | includes sound, reliable, or any grade in between |
| Acceptable: | *sakat 'anhu;* the grader of the hadith did not comment on it, meaning that he found nothing unacceptable in it |

# About the Word *Lord*

The word *lord* in English has several related meanings. The original meaning is ‘master’ or ‘ruler’, and in this sense it is often used to refer to human beings: ‘the lord of the mansion’ or ‘Lord So-and-So’ (in the United Kingdom, for example). The word *Lord* with a capital L is used in the lexicon of Islam to refer to the One and Only God — Allah. In Islam, there is no ambiguity about the meaning of this word. While it is true that one may occasionally use the word *lord* (whether capitalized or not) to refer to a human being, in Islamic discourse the reference of this term is always clear from the context. Whereas for Christians, Hindus and other polytheists, the word *Lord* with a capital L may refer to Allah, to Jesus or to some imagined deity, for Muslims, there can be no plurality of meaning. Allah alone is the Lord, and the Lord is Allah — not Jesus, not Rama, not any other being.

The Editor

# Publisher's Note

All praises and thanks belong to Allah alone, the One, the Almighty, and All-Merciful. Blessings and peace be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the last of His Messengers and Prophets, and upon his family, his Companions, and all those who follow in his footsteps until the end of time.

Allah has created a cure for every disease, regardless of whether it afflicts one's body or soul. *The Remedy for Those Victimized by Sins* is a comprehensive study that highlights spiritual diseases that lead to sinning. Ibn al-Qayyim delves into their causes and specifies their cure in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

This book holds immense importance as far as the development of the self and purification of the soul is concerned. It explains various types of sins (both major and minor), their perilous consequences in this world and the hereafter, and the disgrace and dishonour they bring. It finally provides a perfect remedy that leads the way to salvation, in the form of repentance, obedience to Allah, and supplications.

May Allah accept the efforts of all those who contributed to the production of this book, and may it be acceptable to Him, *âmeen*.

Muhammad Abdul Mohsin Al-Tuwaijri
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# Foreword

All praise is for Allah (*Subḥânahu wa Ta'âlâ* – Glorified and Exalted is He). May the salutations and peace of Allah be upon His Prophet and slave (*ṣalla Allâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* – blessings and peace be upon him), and upon his Companions (*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhum* – may Allah be pleased with all of them) and followers.

This book titled *The Remedy for Those Victimized by Sins* is written by the celebrated imam and scholar Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah bestow mercy upon him. It is one of the most powerful and important writings in the genre of ethics, discipline, development, and purification of self. It discusses supplication and its importance, need, and relationship with predestination or fate.

It also mentions sins and their harm, and vice and its consequences. Ibn al-Qayyim discusses it in detail.

The book also covers legislative and universal punishments, both physical and spiritual, in this world and the hereafter.

It discusses various types of polytheism in worship, actions, statements, and intentions. It mentions the polytheism of the Christians and those who adopted intermediaries and intercessors (in worship).

It discusses major sins and their destructive results, and mentions injustice, murder, and fornication as examples. It further discusses the gateways to sin: thoughts, utterances, and actions.

It covers homosexuality, bestiality, the levels of love, and the harmful effects of excessive adoration.[1]

Along with these, the author expounds upon many other topics. He elaborates on:

> …the nuances of knowledge and its realities, and explanations of how to take account and be vigilant of oneself. No student of knowledge can do without these.[2]

This book has been printed many times in the past, the first being in 1282 AH in Egypt. It was published in Egypt again in 1346 AH. Both prints were titled *al-Jawâb al-Kâfi liman Sa'ala 'an ad-Dawâ' ash-Shâfi* (An acceptable response to the one who asked about the remedy).[3]

It was later printed in Egypt in 1377 AH with the title *ad-Dâ' wad-Dawâ'* (The disease and the remedy). This version was edited by Professor Muhammad Muḥyi ad-Deen 'Abdul-Ḥameed, may Allah bestow mercy upon him.

The author did not use either of the titles mentioned above for this book. Others frequently use these two titles for this work, which was written in response to a question. Even though both titles apply to it, *The Disease and the Remedy* appears more appropriate.[4]

The author's biographers mention this work by the title *The Disease and the Remedy*. These include, for example, al-Ḥâfidh Ibn Rajab in *Kitâb Dhayl Ṭabaqât al-Ḥanâbilah* (2:450), Ibn al-'Imâd in *Shadharât adh-Dhahab* (6:169), and ash-Shawkâni in *al-Badr aṭ-Ṭâli'* (2:144).

Due to this book's two titles, several past and present authors mistakenly thought it was two different books. These include Ḥâji

Khaleefah in *Kashf adh-Dhunoon* (1:728 and 1417), Nadwi and Nadwi in *Rijâl al-Fikr wad-Da'wah* (319),[5] and others.

What distinguishes this book from its previous editions is that all hadiths are adequately referenced.

Our final supplication is: all praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful,*
*the Bestower of mercy, and Whom we rely upon*

A question was put to the great *shaykh* and imam, the impeccable scholar and precise *ḥâfiẓ* Shams ad-Deen Abu ‘Abdullâh, Muhammad ibn Shaykh Taqi ad-Deen Abu Bakr, famously known as Ibn al-Qayyim.[6]

> The question was:
>
> What do the esteemed scholars and imams of the religion – may Allah be pleased with them – say about those who are tried with an affliction and know that if it continues, it will ruin their worldly life and hereafter? They have been attempting to resist it by every means, yet its intensity and strength only increases. What is the path to removing it? What are the means of escaping it?
>
> May Allah bestow mercy upon the one who aids an afflicted person. Allah assists those who help others.[7] Direct us and be among those who reap the rewards – may Allah have mercy on you.
>
> The Shaykh replied:

All praise is for Allah. It is confirmed in the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (*raḍiya Allâhu ‘anhu* – may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah has not sent down a disease without also sending down a cure for it.» (Bukhari)[8]

Jâbir ibn ‘Abdullâh (*raḍiya Allâhu ‘anhumâ* – may Allah be pleased with both of them) narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«There is a medicine for every disease. When that medicine reaches the disease, it is cured by Allah’s permission.» (Muslim)

Usâmah ibn Shareek narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah did not send down a disease without also sending down a cure. Those who know the cure are able to treat it with Allah’s permission.» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*], Aḥmad, al-Ḥumaydi, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Mâjah, Abu Dâwood, and at-Tirmidhi with an authentic chain of narration)[9]

In another narration, it is mentioned:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Allah has not sent down a disease without also sending down a cure or medicine for it, except for one disease.

They asked: O Messenger of Allah! What is it?

He replied: Old age.» (An authentic hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi)

The above hadith refers to the diseases of the heart, soul, and body, along with their cures. The Prophet (ﷺ) classified ignorance as a disease and said that its medicine is to ask the scholars.

Jâbir ibn ‘Abdullâh narrated:

«While we were travelling, one of us was struck with a rock that gashed his head.

He later had a wet dream and asked his companions: Do you think I am allowed to perform dry ablution?

They replied: We do not think so, for you have access to water.

He subsequently took a bath and died.

When we reached the Prophet (ﷺ) and he was informed of this, he exclaimed: They killed him, may Allah kill them! Should they not have asked when they did not know? Asking is the only cure for ignorance. It would have been sufficient to perform dry ablution, wrap a cloth around his injury and wipe over it, and then wash the remainder of his body.» (A reliable hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood, though there is much debate over its chain of narration)

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that ignorance is a disease and its cure is to ask (the people of knowledge). Allah (ﷻ) mentions that the Qur'an is a cure:

﴿وَلَوۡ جَعَلۡنَٰهُ قُرۡءَانًا أَعۡجَمِيّٗا لَّقَالُواْ لَوۡلَا فُصِّلَتۡ ءَايَٰتُهُۥٓۖ ءَأَعۡجَمِيّٞ وَعَرَبِيّٞۗ قُلۡ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ هُدٗى وَشِفَآءٞۖ ... ﴿٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة فُصِّلَت: ٤٤)

﴿If We had made it a Qur'an in a non-Arabic language, they would have said: Why have its verses not been made clear [in Arabic]? Why in a non-Arabic [language], when he [the Prophet] is an Arab? Say: It is, for those who believe, guidance and healing…﴾ *(Fuṣṣilat 41: 44)*[10]

﴿ وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَآءٞ وَرَحۡمَةٞ لِّلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ... ﴿٨٢﴾﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٨٢)

﴿We send down in the Qur'an that which is a healing and mercy for the believers...﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 82)*

The entire Qur'an is a healing and mercy for the believers, as Allah states in the above verses. It cures the hearts of the diseases of ignorance and doubt. The cure Allah (ﷻ) has sent from the heavens – that is, the Qur'an – is more comprehensive, beneficial, and effective than anything else in eliminating diseases.

The following narration by Abu Sa'eed confirms this point:

«A group of the Prophet's Companions set out on a journey and stopped to rest in an area where some Arabs resided. However, the latter refused to host them. Later on, the chief of that clan was stung. All efforts were exerted for his treatment, but nothing helped.

They said to one another: Why do we not approach those men who have stopped for rest? One of them may have something beneficial.

They went to them and explained: Gentlemen! Our chief has been stung. We have tried everything, but nothing has been of any benefit to him! Do any of you have anything?

One of them responded: Yes. By Allah, I am versed in medicine. We requested you to host us, and you refused. So, by Allah, I will not treat him until you give me some compensation.

They agreed on a flock of sheep. He went and wiped his spittle on him, reciting:

﴿ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٢﴾ (سورة الفاتحة: ٢)

﴿All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.﴾ *(al-Fâtiḥah 1: 2)*[11]

It was as if the chief had sprung forth from ropes (that were binding him). He began walking around without any imbalance. The tribal members gave the Companions (the flock) they had agreed upon.

Some of the Companions said: Divide them.

The one who had treated the chief cautioned them: We will not (do anything) until we reach the Prophet (ﷺ) and inform him of what took place. We will see what he tells us to do.

When they arrived to see Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), they mentioned this incident to him. He said: How did you know it was a ruqyah (medicinal incantation)? You are correct. Divide the flock and include a share for me.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

This medicine treated the disease and removed it such that it seemed it had never afflicted the chief. This medicine is one of the easiest. Anyone skilled in treating others by using Soorat al-Fâtiḥah (the first chapter of the Qur'an) would see its incredible effect on healing.

I once remained in Makkah for a while as I was plagued with illness and could not find a doctor or medicine. I treated myself with al-Fâtiḥah and noticed its incredible effects. Since then, I have prescribed it to whoever complains of pain, and many of them quickly return to health.

There is a matter that we must understand here. The verses, supplications, and words of remembrance – with which we seek treatment – are beneficial and curative in and of themselves. Still, their effectiveness is contingent upon the suitability of the place (where the medicine is applied) as well as the doer's strength and zeal. Cure is delayed due to the doer's ineffectiveness or the place's unsuitability. At times, a strong deterrent impedes the effect of the medicine, such as in the case of medicines that treat physical illness. Its failure could also be due to the body not responding well to it or some strong deterrent getting in the way of its effectiveness.

When the medicine is accepted by the body, it benefits the body in proportion to how well it (the body) accepts it. The case of the heart is similar; when spiritual medicines (*ruqâ*[12] and *ta'weedh*[13]) are met with acceptance, they are more effective at removing the illness.

The same applies to supplication, one of the most excellent means of repelling harm and acquiring one's goals. Its effect may sometimes be delayed due to a weakness in supplication. It may be a supplication that Allah hates if it involves transgression. The delay may be due to the heart being weak, inattentive to Allah, or distracted while supplicating. These factors are like a loose bowstring, sending the arrow out weakly. The problem could also be due to an impediment blocking the supplication, like having consumed something unlawful or committed oppression. These

factors could have sealed the heart with sins, or allowed lust, play, and heedlessness to overcome the heart regularly.

We know this from the hadith of Abu Hurayrah, where the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Supplicate to Allah while you are certain of the response. Know that Allah does not accept the supplication of a heedless, distracted heart.» (Recorded by al-Ḥâkim, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Ḥibbân, and al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi; authenticated by al-Albâni and al-Haythami)

Supplication is an effective medicine that removes the disease. However, a heart that is heedless of Allah can nullify its strength. Likewise, consuming what is forbidden negates its strength and/or weakens it. Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«My people! Allah is pure, and He only accepts what is pure. Allah has commanded the believers with what He commanded the Messengers:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرُّسُلُ كُلُواْ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَٱعۡمَلُواْ صَٰلِحًاۖ إِنِّي بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ عَلِيمٞ ٥١﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ٥١)

﴿O Messengers, eat of that which is wholesome and do righteous deeds, for I am well aware of all that you do.﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 51)*

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقۡنَٰكُمۡ ... ١٧٢﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٧٢)

﴿O you who believe! Eat of the good things that We have provided for you…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 172)*

The Prophet (ﷺ) then mentioned a man who makes a long journey in a dishevelled and dusty state and stretches out his hands to heaven, saying: My Lord, my Lord – when his food, drink, and clothing are unlawful, and he is nourished by what is unlawful. He asked how such a person could be answered.» (Muslim)

‘Abdullâh, the son of Imam Aḥmad, quotes from his father:

> When the Children of Israel were plagued with an affliction, they went out together [to supplicate]. Allah revealed to His Prophet to inform them: You come out to the desert with impure bodies and raise towards Me the hands you shed blood with and the hands you have used to fill your homes with unlawful things. You choose now [to supplicate] after My anger upon you has intensified? The only thing I increase for you is your distance from Me.[14]

Abu Dharr states, “The [amount of] supplication needed with righteousness is the amount of salt needed for food.”[15]

# Supplication Is a Medicine

Supplication is one of the most beneficial medicines and the enemy of affliction. It repels and wrestles it, prevents its descent, and uplifts or lightens it after it descends. It is the believer's weapon.

'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Supplication is the weapon of the believer, the central column of religion, and the light of the heavens and the earth.» (A very weak hadith recorded by al-Ḥâkim, Abu Ya'lâ, Ibn 'Adiy, and al-Quḍâ'i)[16]

Supplication has three degrees with regard to offsetting affliction:

1. Supplication is stronger than affliction, and so it repels the latter.
2. Supplication is weaker than affliction, so the affliction overpowers it and strikes the person. Even if supplication is weak, it may alleviate the effects of an affliction.
3. Supplication and affliction counteract one another, and so each prevents the other.

'Â'ishah (*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhâ* – may Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Precaution does not prevent fate; supplication has benefits regarding what has descended and what has not. The affliction may descend and be met by the supplication, and they wrestle until the Day of Resurrection.» (Recorded by al-Ḥâkim, al-Bazzâr, al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and Ibn al-Jawzi; al-Ḥâkim and al-Albâni authenticated it, but adh-Dhahabi, Ibn al-Jawzi, and al-Haythami graded it weak)

Ibn ‘Umar narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Supplication benefits regarding what has descended and what has not, so be keen to supplicate, O slaves of Allah.» (Recorded by al-Ḥâkim and at-Tirmidhi; adh-Dhahabi and at-Tirmidhi graded it weak; al-Albâni graded it reliable)

Thawbân reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Only supplication can deter one’s fate, and only righteousness can increase one’s lifespan. A person is certainly deprived of sustenance because of a sin he has committed.» (Recorded by al-Ḥâkim, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Mâjah, Aḥmad, and al-Baghawi with a disconnected chain)[17]

# Persistent Supplication

One of the most beneficial medicines is persistent supplication. Abu Hurayrah reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Allah becomes angry with a person who does not ask Him.» (Recorded by Ibn Mâjah, at-Tirmidhi, Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, and al-Bayhaqi; authenticated by al-Albâni)

Anas reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Do not give up on your supplications, for no one is ruined while making a supplication.» (A weak hadith recorded by al-Ḥâkim, aḍ-Ḍiyâ' al-Maqdisi, al-'Uqayli, Ibn 'Adiy, Ibn Ḥibbân, and Abu Nu'aym)

Al-Awzâ'i mentioned from az-Zuhri who narrated from 'Urwah who reported that Â'ishah (□) narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Allah loves those who persistently supplicate.» (Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarâni, al-'Uqayli, Ibn 'Adiy, and Ibn Ḥajar)[18]

Qatâdah reports from Muwarraq:

I have not found a better example of a believer in this world than a person upon a wooden log at sea who supplicates: O Lord! O Lord! –

hoping Allah saves him.[19]

# Being Hasty about the Supplication's Response

A flaw that hinders the effectiveness of supplication is the person being hasty or growing impatient for a response. After a while, such a person becomes disheartened and ceases to supplicate. They are like those who plant a seed and begin to water and nurture it. However, they become irritated while waiting for it to bloom, and so they walk away and neglect it.

Abu Hurayrah (□) narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«You will be responded to as long as you do not become impatient and say: I supplicated but received no response.» (Bukhari)

Abu Hurayrah narrated:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Supplicants will continue to be responded to, as long as they do not supplicate for sin or the severing of kin, and as long as they are not impatient.

Someone asked: O Messenger of Allah! What is impatience?

He replied: It means that the supplicant says: I supplicated, I supplicated, but I do not think I will be responded to.

He becomes disheartened at that point and stops supplicating.*»* (Muslim)

Anas narrated:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: Supplicants will continue to prosper as long as they do not become impatient.

People asked: O Messenger of Allah! How does one become impatient?

He replied: By saying: I supplicated to my Lord, but He did not respond to me.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, Abu Ya'lâ, and Ibn 'Adiy with a good chain of narration)

# Times of *Istijâbah*

It is best for the supplication to be accompanied by an attentive heart focused on making its request. Also, the supplication should coincide with one of the six times of istijâbah (when supplications are answered). These times are:

1. The final third of the night.
2. The time of the *adhân* (call to prayer).
3. Between the adhân and *iqâmah* (call to stand for prayer).
4. At the end of the prescribed prayers.
5. Once the imam ascends the pulpit on Friday until he completes the congregational prayer.
6. On Friday, during the final hour after *'aṣr* (the mid-afternoon obligatory prayer).

# Perfecting the Supplication

It is also best for the supplication to coincide with the humility of the heart, whereby it melts between the Hands of the Lord and lies humbled and broken. In addition, the one supplicating should face the qibla (direction of prayer) and be in a state of purity. One should raise one's hands and begin by thanking Allah and praising Him. Then one should send salutations upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), Allah's servant and Messenger.

Following this, one should precede one's request with repentance and seeking forgiveness. One should present oneself before Allah, asking Him incessantly while complimenting Him and begging Him out of fear and hope. One should seek nearness to Allah through His names and attributes and by testifying to His oneness. If one gathers these elements and offers an act of charity before this supplication, it will hardly ever be rejected. Additionally, if it contains the greatest name (of Allah), it is likely to be accepted, as informed by the Prophet (ﷺ).

«'Abdullâh ibn Buraydah narrated from his father (Buraydah ibn al-Ḥaṣeeb) that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) heard a man say:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنِّي أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، الْأَحَدُ الصَّمَدُ الَّذِي لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ.»

*Allâhumma inni as'aluka bi anni ash-hadu annaka anta Allâhu, lâ ilâha illâ ant, al-Aḥad uṣ-Ṣamad ul-ladhi lam yalid wa lam yoolad, wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan Aḥad.*

(O Allah! I ask You by the virtue that I testify You are Allah. There is no god worthy of worship except You, the One, the Self-Sufficient Master, Who did not beget and was not begotten, and to whom no one is equal.)

The Prophet (ﷺ) remarked: He has asked Allah by His name by which when asked, He gives, and by which when supplicated, He answers.» (A sound hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood, Ibn Ḥibbân, Ibn Mâjah, at-Tirmidhi, Aḥmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, and al-Ḥâkim)

Another narration mentioned:

«You have asked Allah using His greatest name.» (A sound hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood)

«Anas ibn Mâlik reported that he was sitting with Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) while a man was praying. The man supplicated with these words:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدَ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ الْمَنَّانُ بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ، يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ.»

*Allâhumma inni as'aluka bi anna lakal-Ḥamd. Lâ ilâha illâ antal-Mannân,*[20] *badee' us-samâwâti wal-arḍ, yâ Dhal-Jalâli wal-Ikrâm, yâ Ḥayyu yâ Qayyoom.*

(O Allah, indeed, I ask You since all praise is due to You. There is none worthy of worship except You, the Bestower, the Creator of the heavens and earth. O Possessor of majesty and honour, O Ever-living, O Eternal!)

The Prophet (ﷺ) remarked: He has indeed asked Allah by His greatest name, by which He responds to supplications and gives when He is asked.» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*], an-Nasâ'i, Abu Dâwood, Ibn Mâjah, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Ḥibbân, Aḥmad, and Ibn Abi Shaybah; some versions have authentic chains of narration)

Asmâ' bint Yazeed narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah's greatest name is in these verses:

﴿وَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٦٣)

﴿And your God is One God: There is no god worthy of worship except Him, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 163)*

﴿الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْحَىُّ ٱلْقَيُّومُ ﴿٢﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١-٢)

﴿*Alif*, *Lâm*, *Meem*. Allah: there is no god worthy of worship except Him, the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining and All-Sustaining.﴾ *(Âl 'Imrân 3: 1-2).*» (An authentic hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Abu Dâwood, Ibn Mâjah, Aḥmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, ad-Dârimi, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, al-Bayhaqi, and 'Abd ibn Ḥumayd)

Abu Hurayrah, Anas ibn Mâlik, and Rabee'ah ibn 'Âmir reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Cling onto the statement:

«يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ.»

*Yâ Dhal-Jalâli wal-Ikrâm.*

(O Possessor of Majesty and Honour.)» (An authentic hadith recorded by Bukhari [in *at-Târeekh al-Kabeer*], Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, at-Tirmidhi, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni)

In other words, hold fast to it and constantly use it.

Abu Hurayrah narrated:

«Whenever the Prophet (ﷺ) was troubled by a matter, he raised his head towards the sky, earnestly supplicating:

«يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ.»

*Yâ Ḥayyu Yâ Qayyoom*.

(O Ever-Living One, O Sustainer of existence.)» (An odd [*ghareeb*] hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi)

Anas ibn Mâlik narrated:

«Whenever the Prophet (ﷺ) was distressed by a matter, he said:

«يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيثُ.»

*Yâ Ḥayyu yâ Qayyoom, bi raḥmatika astagheeth*.

(O Ever-Living, O Sustainer of existence, I beseech You for Your mercy.)» (A reliable hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn as-Sunni)

Abu Umâmah narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah’s greatest name is in three chapters of the Qur’an: Soorat al-Baqarah, Soorat Âl ‘Imrân, and Soorat Ṭâ Hâ.» (Recorded by al-Ḥâkim, aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi, Ibn Mâjah, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and al-Bayhaqi with a reliable chain of narration)

Al-Qâsim states, “I investigated it and found it to be: *al-Ḥayyul-Qayyoom* [the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of Existence].”

Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqqâṣ narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«This is the supplication of Dhun-Noon.[21] He called out while he was in the whale’s stomach:

﴿ ... لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنتَ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ إِنِّي كُنتُ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٨٧)

﴿…There is no god worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You; I have indeed done wrong.﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 87)*

Whenever a Muslim supplicates with it for anything at all, Allah responds to it.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, al-Ḥâkim, an-Nasâ'i, Aḥmad, Abu Ya'lâ, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with a reliable chain of narration)

Another version of the hadith narrated by Sa'd stated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«I would like to inform you of something. If something serious happens to someone and they supplicate to Allah with this, they will be relieved…»

He was referring to the supplication of Dhun-Noon.

Sa'd also reported:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: I would like to inform you of Allah's greatest name. It is the supplication of Yoonus.

A man asked: O Messenger of Allah! Was it exclusively for Yoonus?

He replied: Did you not hear the words of the Most High:

﴿ فَٱسۡتَجَبۡنَا لَهُۥ وَنَجَّيۡنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَمِّۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُنجِي ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٨٨)

﴿So We answered his prayer and delivered him from his distress; thus do We deliver the believers.﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 88)*?

Any sick Muslim who supplicates with it forty times and then dies from that sickness is given the reward of a martyr. The one cured through it is both

cured and forgiven.» (Recorded by al-Ḥâkim and aṭ-Ṭabari; its chain contains a *matrook* [discarded] narrator)

Ibn ‘Abbâs reported that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to say during times of distress:

«لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ، وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ، وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ.»

«*Lâ ilâha illâ Allâhul-‘Adheemul-Ḥaleem; lâ ilâha illâ Allâhu, Rabbul-‘arshil-‘adheem; lâ ilâha illâ Allâhu, Rabbus-samâwâtis-sab‘, wa Rabbul-‘arḍi, wa Rabbul-‘arshil-kareem*.

(There is no god worthy of worship except Allah, the Most Great, the Most Forbearing. There is no god worthy of worship except Allah, Lord of the great Throne. There is no god worthy of worship except Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and earth, and Lord of the noble Throne.)» (Bukhari and Muslim)

«‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib narrated: Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) taught me that when something distressful happens to me, I am to say:

«لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ، سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَتَبَارَكَ اللهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَالْحَمْدُ للهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.»

*Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh ul-Ḥaleem ul-Kareem; subḥân Allâhi wa Tabârak Allâhu Rabbul-‘arshil-‘adheem; wal-ḥamdulillâhi Rabbil-‘âlameen*.

(There is no god worthy of worship except Allah, the Most Forbearing, the Most Noble. Exalted is Allah, and Blessed is Allah, Lord of the great Throne. And all praise is for Allah, Lord of the worlds.)» (Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Ḥâkim; authenticated by Aḥmad Shâkir)

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«If anyone is plagued with grief or worry and makes the following supplication, Allah will dispel the grief and worry, and replace it with happiness:

«اللّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ ابْنُ عَبْدِكَ ابْنُ أَمَتِكَ نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَاؤكَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَداً مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوِ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ القُرْآنَ رَبِيعَ قَلْبِي وَنورَ صَدْرِي وجَلَاءَ حُزْنِي وذَهَابَ هَمِّي.»

*Allâhumma inni ‘abduk, ibnu ‘abdik, ibnu amatik; nâṣiyati bi yadik, mâḍin fiya ḥukmuk, ‘adlun fiya qaḍâ’uk. As’aluka bi kulli ismin huwa laka sammayta bihi nafsak, aw ‘allamtahu aḥadan min khalqik, aw anzaltahu fee kitâbik, awista’tharta bihi fee ‘ilmil-ghaybi ‘indak – an taj‘al al-Qur’âna rabee‘a qalbi, wa noora ṣadri, wa jalâ’a ḥuzni, wa dhahâba hammi*.

(O Allah! I am Your slave, the son of Your slave, the son of Your maidservant. My forelock is in Your Hand, Your command over me is ever executed and Your decree over me is just. I ask You by every name belonging to You, which You have named Yourself with, or which You have taught to any of Your creation, or which You have revealed in Your Book, or which You have preserved in the knowledge of the unseen with You. I ask You to make the Qur’an the life of my heart, the light of my breast, the relief of my sorrow, and the departure of my anxiety.)

Someone asked: O Messenger of Allah! Should we not learn it?

He replied: Yes, indeed. Everyone who hears it should learn it.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, Ibn Ḥibbân, Abu Ya‘lâ, Ibn as-Sunni, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with an authentic chain of narration)

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood mentions, “Whenever a Prophet was afflicted with distress, he sought refuge in *tasbeeḥ*.”[22]

Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ mentions that al-Ḥasan narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik reported:

> A Companion of the Prophet [ﷺ], also one of the *Anṣâr* [the Muslim citizens of Madinah], was known as Abu Mi‘laq. He was a tradesman who would travel far and wide to invest his and others’ wealth. He was a cautious, pious worshipper. During one of his journeys, a masked, armed robber confronted him.
>
> The robber said to him: Put down your belongings, for I will kill you.
>
> Abu Mi‘laq responded: What will you get from spilling my blood? Take the wealth.
>
> He replied: I will get the wealth anyway, but my true aim is to spill your blood.
>
> He told him: If you insist, allow me to pray four units of prayer.
>
> The robber replied: Pray as you like.
>
> The man performed ablution and prayed four units. One of his supplications in the final prostration was:
>
> «يَا وَدُودُ، يَا ذَا الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدِ، يَا فَعَّالًا لِمَا تُرِيدُ، أَسْأَلُكَ بِعِزِّكَ الَّذِي لَا يُرَامُ، وَبِمُلْكِكَ الَّذِي لَا يُضَامُ، وَبِنُورِكَ الَّذِي مَلَأَ أَرْكَانَ عَرْشِكَ أَنْ تَكْفِيَنِي شَرَّ هَذَا اللِّصِّ، يَا مُغِيثُ! أَغِثْنِي يَا مُغِيثُ! أَغِثْنِي.»
>
> *Yâ Wadood! Yâ Dhal-‘arshil-majeed! Yâ fa‘âllan limâ tureed! As’aluka bi ‘izzik al-ladhi lâ yurâm, wa bi mulkik al-ladhi lâ yuḍâm, wa bi noorik al-ladhi mala’a arkâna ‘arshik an takfiyani sharra hâdhal-liṣṣ. Yâ Mugheeth! Aghithni. Yâ Mugheeth! Aghithni.*
>
> [O Most Loving, O Owner of the Majestic Throne, O Doer of whatever You wish, I ask You by Your might that is never attained by another, and by Your dominion that never dwindles, and by Your light

that fills the corners of Your Throne, to protect me from the harm of this robber. O Rescuer! Rescue me… O Rescuer! Rescue me…]

He supplicated with these words three times.

Suddenly, a knight approached with a spear in hand, which he laid between his horse's ears. When the robber noticed him, he turned towards him. The knight stabbed and killed him.

He then came to Abu Mi'laq and ordered him to stand.

He asked: Who are you? May my parents be ransomed for you. Allah has indeed rescued me through you today.

He replied: I am an angel from the fourth heaven. When you supplicated the first time, I heard the doors of the heavens rattle. When you supplicated the second time, I heard an uproar from the people of the heavens. When you supplicated the third time, I was told that it was the supplication of someone distressed, so I asked Allah to appoint me to kill him.

Al-Ḥasan mentions: Those who perform ablution, pray four units, and supplicate with this supplication will undoubtedly be responded to, irrespective of whether they are distressed.[23]

# Some Secrets of Supplication

We often find that Allah responded to certain supplications of people. It may have been because they expressed urgency or devotion to Allah along with these supplications. Or, they may have performed a certain good deed, so He responded to their supplication. They may have coincided with a time when supplications are more likely to be accepted, or there may have been similar circumstances. When the supplication was responded to, the person may have thought that the secret was in the wording. They might have taken it in isolation without considering other factors associated with the initial supplication.

This case is similar to a person who takes a beneficial medicine at its proper time in an appropriate manner and thus benefits from it. Another person may mistakenly think that merely taking this medicine is sufficient to achieve the desired aim. Many people make this common mistake.

A person may earnestly supplicate at a grave and be responded to. The ignorant may assume that the secret was the grave.[24] They do not realize that the secret is the urgency and genuine appeal to Allah, the Most High. Were this (same genuine appeal) to take place in one of the houses of Allah, it would be better and more beloved to Him.

# Supplication Is Like a Weapon

Supplications and ways of seeking refuge with Allah are like weapons. However, weapons are contingent upon those who wield them, not just upon their sharpness. A weapon will only wound the enemy when it has no flaws, the arm carrying it is strong, and there is no other deterrent. The desired effect will not be achieved whenever one of these three is lacking.

Suppose the supplication itself is invalid, there is no conformity between the supplicant's heart and words (while requesting), or a hindrance prevents the response. In all such cases, the desired effect is not achieved.

# Between Supplication and *Qadar*

A popular misconception is that if a matter for which a person supplicates is decreed, it will occur regardless of supplication. If it has not been decreed, it will not happen, regardless of whether the person asks for it.

One group considered this assumption correct. So they dismissed supplicating altogether, claiming there is no benefit in it. These people (having extensive ignorance and deviance) contradict themselves, for their stance mandates suspending all means.

It can be said to one of them: If it has been decreed that you will be full and have (your thirst) quenched, it must occur regardless of whether you eat. Yet if it has not been decreed for you, it will not happen regardless of whether you eat! Similarly, if children have been decreed for you, they will be born regardless of whether you had intercourse with your wife. If children have not been decreed, they will not be born. So there is no need for marriage or intimacy and so on!

Would anyone, let alone a sane person, say such a thing? Even animals are disposed to seek their means of survival and livelihood. Animals seem more sensible and intelligent than these people, who are like cattle. In fact, they are more misguided in (their) ways.

Another group considered itself wise. They claimed that occupying oneself with supplication is solely an act of worship rewarded by Allah. It does not affect the request itself. These claimants to wisdom see no difference between supplicating and restraining the heart and tongue from doing so to achieve one's aims. To them, the effect of supplicating is identical to the effect of silence; there is no difference between them.

Yet another group, wiser than the one above, mentioned that Allah (□) made supplication a means to fulfil the need. When Allah inspires one to supplicate, this indicates that one's need has been taken care of. It is like seeing a dark cloud approaching in the winter, which one takes as evidence and a sign that it will rain.

They maintain that the same rule applies to reward for good deeds and punishment for sin and disbelief. These deeds are signs that reward and punishment will take place; they do not actually cause them. They hold that breaking and breakage simply concur, as do burning and being burned, and dying and being killed. None of these leads to the other whatsoever, nor is there a connection between cause and effect. They merely happen together, but one does not result from the other.

This group has opposed intelligence, common sense, instinct, the Sharia (Islamic law), and every other sensible group. They have driven everyone with reasonable common sense to laugh at them.

The correct stance is that there is a fourth group that the questioner failed to mention. They believe these decreed matters were decreed (to occur) because of a particular means, and supplication is one of those means. They are not decreed **in isolation of** the means but are destined to be **as a result of** the means.

When a person uses the correct means, the decreed matter occurs, but without suitable means, it will not happen. A full stomach and quenched thirst are decreed as a result of eating and drinking. A child is decreed as a result of intercourse, and harvesting crops is decreed as a result of planting.

The soul exiting the animal is decreed as a result of slaughtering. Entering paradise is decreed as a result of actions, and entering hellfire is also decreed as a result of actions. This understanding is correct, and the questioner was deprived of it.

Supplication is one of the strongest means of attaining one's goals. Since a decreed matter can be achieved through supplication, it is incorrect to claim that supplication has no benefit. Similarly, one cannot argue that there is no benefit in eating, drinking, being active, and doing things. In other words, nothing is more beneficial or effective than supplication to fulfil one's aims.

The Companions (□) were the most informed among the Ummah (Muslim nation) regarding Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and the most knowledgeable regarding His religion. They supplicated a lot and understood its conditions and etiquette better than others.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb would turn to supplication for victory over his enemies, and it was his greatest artillery. He would explain to his Companions that they were not victorious due to their significant number but were granted victory from the skies. He would also specify that he was not concerned about the response. His concern was with the supplication. When we are inspired to supplicate, the response comes with it.

A poet elaborates:

*If You did not wish to grant my hopes*
*And what I request from Your Generous Hands,*
*You would not have accustomed me to ask.*

Inspiration to supplicate indicates that the response will follow:

﴿ ... ٱدۡعُونِيٓ أَسۡتَجِبۡ لَكُمۡۚ ... ٦٠ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٦٠)

﴿…Call upon Me; I will answer your prayer…﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 60)*

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ ... ﴿١٨٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٨٦)

﴿When My slaves ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close [to them]; I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 186)*

Abu Hurayrah reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Allah becomes angry with a person who does not ask Him.» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*], Ibn Mâjah, at-Tirmidhi, Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, and al-Bayhaqi; authenticated by Ibn Katheer and Ibn Abi Ḥâtim)

The above indicates that we achieve His pleasure when we ask Him and obey Him. When our Lord, the Blessed and High, is pleased, His pleasure leads to goodness, just as His anger and the person's disobedience lead to every calamity and affliction:

Imam Aḥmad mentions (that Allah says):

> I am the Lord; none is worthy of worship but Me. When I am pleased, I bless, and My blessings are endless. When I am angered, I curse, and My curse reaches the seventh descendent [or progeny].[25]

Drawing near to the Lord of the worlds, seeking His pleasure, and showing kindness and excellence to His creation are the most excellent means to achieve good. Reason, the Revelation, instincts, and human experience, irrespective of differences in religion and creed, indicate that. In contrast, their opposites are the most effective means towards every evil. Obedience and closeness to Allah and benevolence towards His creation attract His blessings and repel His wrath; nothing is better than that.

In the Qur'an, Allah has particularly stipulated the actions that acquire good and evil in this world and the hereafter. He has specified them as a conditional clause, an effect resulting from a cause, and an end resulting from a particular means.

This point is clearly explained in the Qur'an in many places. At times, a universal consequence is mentioned as an appropriate recompense for a (violated) legislative matter:

﴿فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَن مَّا نُهُوا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ ﴿١٦٦﴾﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ١٦٦)

﴿When they insolently persisted in doing what they had been forbidden to do, We said to them: Be apes, despised and rejected.﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 166)*

﴿فَلَمَّا آسَفُونَا انتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ ... ﴿٥٥﴾﴾ (سورة الزُّخرُف: ٥٥)

﴿When they provoked Our wrath, We exacted retribution upon them…﴾ *(az-Zukhruf 43: 55)*

﴿وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا ... ﴿٣٨﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣٨)

﴿As for the thief, male or female, cut off their hands as a recompense for what they have done…﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 38)*

﴿إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٥)

﴿For Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, obedient men and obedient women, truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient women, humble men and humble women, charitable men and charitable women, men who fast and women who fast, men who restrain their carnal desires and women who do likewise, men

who remember Allah much and women who do likewise – for them, Allah has prepared forgiveness and an immense reward.﴾ *(al-Aḥzâb 33: 35)*

There are many such examples. In other places, the Most High mentions recompense in the form of a conditional clause:

﴿ ... إِن تَتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ يَجۡعَل لَّكُمۡ فُرۡقَانٗا وَيُكَفِّرۡ عَنكُمۡ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمۡ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡۗ ... ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنفال: ٢٩)

﴿…if you fear Allah, He will give you the insight to distinguish between right and wrong, absolve you of your sins and forgive you…﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 29)*

﴿فَإِن تَابُواْ وَأَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَإِخۡوَٰنُكُمۡ فِي ٱلدِّينِۗ ... ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

(سورة التوبة: ١١)

﴿Yet if they repent, establish prayer and give zakat, then they are your brothers in faith…﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 11)*

﴿وَأَلَّوِ ٱسۡتَقَٰمُواْ عَلَى ٱلطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسۡقَيۡنَٰهُم مَّآءً غَدَقٗا ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة الجن: ١٦)

﴿If they had steadfastly followed the right way, We would have bestowed upon them abundant water [and provision].﴾ *(al-Jinn 72: 16)*

Many similar verses can be found in the Qur'an.

Sometimes, Allah uses the Arabic letter *lâm,* which denotes justification (for example, when used with the term *li*, meaning 'that' or 'so that'):

﴿كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ إِلَيۡكَ مُبَٰرَكٞ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓاْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة ص: ٢٩)

﴿This is a blessed Book that We have sent down to you, **so that** they may ponder its verses, and **so that** people of understanding may pay heed.﴾ *(Ṣâd*

*38: 29)*

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلۡنَٰكُمۡ أُمَّةٗ وَسَطٗا لِّتَكُونُواْ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ شَهِيدٗاۗ ... ﴿١٤٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٤٣)

﴿Thus We have made of you an Ummah [nation, community] justly balanced, **that** you might be witnesses over humankind, and the Messenger might be a witness over you...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 143)*

The Most High uses the particle *kay* (so that), which also denotes justification:

﴿ ... كَيۡ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةَۢ بَيۡنَ ٱلۡأَغۡنِيَآءِ مِنكُمۡۚ ... ﴿٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحشر: ٧)

﴿…**so that** wealth does not circulate only among those of you who are rich…﴾ *(al-Ḥashr 59: 7)*

He uses the term *bi*, meaning ‘for’, ‘in return for’, or ‘because of’:

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتۡ أَيۡدِيكُمۡ... ﴿١٨٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٨٢)

﴿This is **because of** what your hands wrought…﴾ *(Âl ‘Imrân 3: 182)*

﴿ ... تِلۡكُمُ ٱلۡجَنَّةُ أُورِثۡتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٤٣)

﴿…This is paradise, which you are made to inherit as a reward **for** your deeds.﴾ *(al-A‘râf 7: 43)*

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّي بَعۡضَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعۡضَۢا بِمَا كَانُواْ يَكۡسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١٢٩)

﴿Thus, We cause the wrongdoers to take one another as friends and allies **because of** their misdeeds.﴾ *(al-An‘âm 6: 129)*

﴿ ... ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ يَكۡفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ... ﴿١١٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١١٢)

﴿…This is **because** they disbelieved in the revelations of Allah…﴾ *(Âl ‘Imrân 3: 112)*

The Most High uses the justifier either explicitly or implicitly:

﴿ … فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَٱمْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ … ﴿٢٨٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٨٢)

﴿…if two men are not available, then a man and two women, such as you choose, to act as witnesses, so that if one of them forgets, the other can remind her…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 282)*

﴿ … أَن تَقُولُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَٰذَا غَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ١٧٢)

﴿…lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection: Verily, we were unaware of this.﴾ *(al-A‘râf 7: 172)*

﴿أَن تَقُولُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ عَلَىٰ طَآئِفَتَيْنِ مِن قَبْلِنَا … ﴿١٥٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١٥٦)

﴿Lest you should say: The scripture was sent down to two groups [the Jews and Christians] before us…﴾ *(al-An‘âm 6: 156)*

He uses the (letter) *fâ’* to show the consequences of something:

﴿فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِذَنۢبِهِمْ فَسَوَّىٰهَا ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشمس: ١٤)

﴿But they disbelieved him and hamstrung her. **So** their Lord unleashed against them, for their sin, a punishment that reached them all.﴾ *(ash-Shams 91: 14)*

﴿فَعَصَوْا۟ رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَهُمْ أَخْذَةً رَّابِيَةً ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحاقة: ١٠)

﴿They [each] disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord, **so** He seized them with a severe punishment.﴾ *(al-Ḥâqqah 69: 10)*

﴿فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَكَانُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُهْلَكِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ٤٨)

﴿**So** they rejected them both, and were among those who were destroyed.﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 48)*

There are other similar instances.

Allah uses the particle *lammâ,* which denotes repayment, as follows:

﴿فَلَمَّآ ءَاسَفُونَا ٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ ... ﴿٥٥﴾﴾ (سورة الزُّخرُف: ٥٥)

﴿**When** they provoked Our wrath, We exacted retribution upon them…﴾ *(az-Zukhruf 43: 55)*

He uses the particle *in* (indeed or verily) to emphasize something favourable:

﴿... إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يُسَـٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ... ﴿٩٠﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٩٠)

﴿…**Verily**, they used to hasten to do good deeds...﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 90)*

At other times, it emphasizes the opposite:

﴿... إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنَـٰهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٧٧)

﴿…They were a people given to wickedness, so We drowned them all.﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 77)*

He uses the particle *law-lâ* to show that what came before is connected with what follows:

﴿فَلَوْلَآ أَنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَبِّحِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾ لَلَبِثَ فِى بَطْنِهِۦٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة الصافات: ١٤٣-١٤٤)

﴿**Were it not for the fact** that he was one of those who glorified Allah a great deal, he would have remained in its belly until the Day of

Resurrection.﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 143-144)*

He uses *law* (if) in a conditional clause:

﴿ ... وَلَوۡ أَنَّهُمۡ فَعَلُواْ مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِۦ لَكَانَ خَيۡرٗا لَّهُمۡ وَأَشَدَّ تَثۡبِيتٗا ٦٦﴾ (سورة النساء: ٦٦)

﴾…But **if** they did what they were instructed to do, it would indeed be better for them, and would increase them in steadfastness.﴿ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 66)*

In brief, from the beginning till the end, the Qur'an asserts that good and evil recompense in the universe and legislation results from a particular means. The affairs of this world and the hereafter, and their prosperity and corruption, are contingent upon the means and (human) actions.

Whoever understands this matter and reflects upon it adequately will reap enormous benefits. Those who rely on fate out of ignorance, incompetence, and negligence depend on inability. On their inability will be their reliance!

Those with proper understanding resist fate with fate, repel fate with fate, and defy fate with fate. A person can only live in this manner because hunger, thirst, cold, and the various manifestations of fear and danger are all part of fate. The entire creation works towards repelling this fate with fate.

Those whom Allah inspires and guides rightly repel the fate of punishment in the hereafter with the fate of repentance, belief, and good deeds. This fate of punishment in the hereafter is equivalent to the fate we fear in this world. Repentance, belief, and good deeds also serve as an escape from the latter in every way, for the Lord of the two realms is One and His wisdom is One. Fate neither contradicts nor invalidates itself; this is one of the noblest matters for those who know its worth and give it due attention, and Allah is indeed the source of all strength.

Two elements complete people's success and happiness:

1. The first element is knowing the detailed causes of good and evil. This gives people insight into what they witness in the world around them, what they experience themselves or in others, and what news they hear about the past and present nations.

   One of the most beneficial means of gaining insight is reflecting upon the Qur'an, for it delivers this insight perfectly. It contains the causes of good and evil, all explained in explicit detail. One should also reflect on the Sunnah (the practice and collected sayings of Prophet Muhammad [ﷺ]), for it is the sibling of the Qur'an and the second revelation. Those who diligently dedicate themselves towards these two sources find them sufficient and do not need anything else. These sources will grant them the vision to observe good and evil and their respective causes.

   Ponder over the news of the nations and the days of Allah (where His power, wisdom, and mercy manifest). Compare them with those who obey Him and defy Him. This will precisely match what you have learned from the Qur'an and Sunnah. You will find evidence in every detail He has explained and promised, and in everything you have learned from His signs in the horizons. You will find evidence indicating that the Qur'an and the Messenger (ﷺ) are true and that Allah always fulfils His every promise. History portrays in detail the holistic causes for good and evil of which Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) informed us.

2. The second element is being careful not to deceive oneself regarding these causes. This is one of the most important matters. People know that sin and negligence inevitably harm their worldly life and the hereafter. Despite this, they deceive themselves by depending at times on Allah's pardon and forgiveness, procrastinating repentance, seeking forgiveness only verbally, or performing only voluntary acts. At other times, they may deceive themselves by virtue of their knowledge, by

blaming fate or the phenomenon (of sin), or sometimes by following the example of their leaders.

Many people think that if they do something wrong, then say: *astaghfirullâh* (I seek forgiveness from Allah) – this removes the effect of the sin and counters it!

A supposedly knowledgeable person said to me, “I do whatever I want. Then I say a hundred times: *Subḥân Allâhi wa bi ḥamdihi* (Glorified is Allah, and by praising Him [I glorify Him]).” Consequently, all is forgiven as it has been confirmed that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Those who say *Subḥân Allâhi wa bi ḥamdihi* a hundred times in a single day will have their sins forgiven, even if they were as (plentiful as) the foam of the ocean.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

A man from Makkah said to me, “When one of us does anything [sinful], we perform ablution and circumambulate the Sacred House seven times, which erases the sin.”

Another person informed me: It has been confirmed that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Someone committed a sin and begged: O Lord! I have committed a sin, so please forgive me.

Allah forgave the person.

That person stopped sinning for however long Allah wished; then he committed another sin and supplicated: O Lord! I have committed a sin. Please forgive me.

Allah forgave the person.

Again, the person stopped sinning for however long Allah wished; then he committed another sin and pleaded: O Lord! I have committed a sin. Please forgive me.

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, responded: My slave knows that there is a Lord Who forgives and punishes sins. I have forgiven My slave, so let this person do whatever he wishes.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The person then exclaimed: I do not doubt that I have a Lord Who forgives and punishes sins!

Such people cling to the texts that make them hopeful; they depend upon them and follow them to the letter. When they are rebuked for their sins and drowning in them, they list for you everything they have memorized about the expansive mercy of Allah, His forgiveness, and the texts of hope.

The foolish ones bring forth the weirdest and most shocking things, like their words:

*Increase whatever you can of sinfulness,*
*Since the One you are heading to is the Most Generous.*

Another person referred to the expansive pardon of Allah and claimed that protecting oneself from sins is ignorance. Yet another claimed that abandoning sin challenges and belittles Allah's forgiveness.

Abu Muhammad ibn Ḥazm mentions, "I heard one of these people supplicating: O Allah! I seek refuge in You from infallibility!"

Some of these deluded people cling to the issue of determinism. They allege that individuals neither act of their own accord nor have any choice. They maintain that each individual is simply compelled to commit these sins.

The issue of *irjâ'* deludes others. They allege:

- Faith entails simply believing (in the heart).
- Actions are not a result of faith.

- The faith of the most flagrant sinner is identical to the faith of Jibreel (Gabriel) (*‘alayhi as-salâm* – peace be upon him) and Mikâ’eel (Michael)!

Others are deluded by loving the ascetics, the scholars, and the righteous. They visit their graves and invoke these people. They seek intercession and nearness to Allah through them, and they ask Him through these people’s virtue and sanctity in His Eyes.[26]

Some are deluded because they think their forefathers and ancestors have an elevated rank and prestige before Allah. They do not invoke Him but wait for these predecessors to intercede for them. In this case, they liken (Allah) to the rulers who dismiss the crimes their dignitaries’ children and relatives commit. Even if one of them commits a heinous crime, that person’s name is cleared through the rank and reputation of his father or grandfather.

Some are deluded by the fact that Allah (□) does not need to punish them. They claim that punishing them does not increase His kingdom in any way and that His mercy does not diminish His kingdom. They say, “I am desperate for His mercy, and He is the richest of the rich. If a poor, needy person were desperate for a drink of water, and there was someone whose home had a flowing stream, the latter would not keep the needy person away from it. Allah is even more generous and more expansive, for forgiveness does not belittle Him in any way nor does punishment augment His kingdom.”

Some are deluded by the corrupt understanding of the Qur’an and Sunnah that they and others like them have. One person depended upon the following verse:

﴿وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰٓ ۝٥﴾ (سورة الضُّحى: ٥)

﴿And your Lord will surely give you so that you will be well pleased.﴾ *(aḍ-Ḍuḥâ 93: 5)*

This person added, “He does not like anyone from His nation to be in hellfire.”

Others depend on the following verse:

﴿ ... إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلۡغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ٥٣ ﴾ (سورة الزُّمَر: ٥٣)

﴿…Verily, it is He Who is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾ *(az-Zumar 39: 53)*

One of the ugliest manifestations of ignorance is when being forgiven for polytheism, the cardinal sin, is assumed to fall under this statement. In reality, this verse applies exclusively to those who repent. The sin of every truly penitent person is forgiven, irrespective of what the sin was. If this verse were not regarding those who repent, it would cancel all the texts that threaten sinners and the hadiths that mention the monotheists being removed from hellfire via intercession.[27]

The ignorant are deluded about Allah’s warning in the following verse:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلۡكَرِيمِ ٦ ﴾ (سورة الانفطار: ٦)

﴿O man, what has deceived you concerning your Most Generous Lord?﴾ *(al-Infiṭâr 82: 6)*

Some people say, “Look at His generosity!” Others say, “It is as if He has given these deluded people the answer [in the same verse].” This is awful ignorance.

People are only deceived about their Lord by:

- The deceiver (Satan);
- Their soul that prompts them to commit evil;
- Their ignorance and desires.

The Exalted uses the word *al-Kareem* (the Most Generous), which means the powerful Master Who is obeyed. It means we should not be deluded about Him and should not neglect His great status. This deluded person did not identify the deceiver and was deluded by something that is unbefitting of being a reason for deception.

Some are deluded by Allah's statements about hellfire:

﴿فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى ﴿١٥﴾ الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١٦﴾﴾ (سورة الليل: ١٤-١٦)

﴿So I have warned you of a fire which is blazing. None will [enter to] burn therein except the most wretched one; who had denied and turned away.﴾ *(al-Layl 92: 14-16)*[28]

﴿... أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٤)

﴿…which is prepared for the disbelievers.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 24)*

These deluded individuals do not realize that His words ﴿So I warn you of a raging fire﴾ refer to a particular fire (for the disbelievers). It is just one of the pits of hell. Even if it were referring to hell at large, He did not say: None will enter it… Rather, He mentions: ﴿None will [enter to] burn therein except the most wretched one﴾. Not burning in it (forever) does not necessitate not entering it. The phrase ﴿burn therein﴾ is more specific than entering. Negating a particular aspect does not necessarily negate the more general premise.

Were these deluded individuals to reflect on the above verse, they would realize that they are not included in it. This means they are not among those who are guaranteed refuge from hellfire.

Along with His words about hellfire being ﴿prepared for the disbelievers﴾, He also mentions that paradise is ﴿prepared for the pious﴾ *(Âl 'Imrân 3: 133).*

Hellfire being prepared for the disbelievers does not conflict with the fact that the sinful and oppressive will also enter it. Likewise, if paradise is prepared for the pious, it does not mean that people who have not done any good or whose hearts contain only a speck of faith will not also enter it.

Some are deluded about fasting on the day of *'Âshoorâ'* or the Day of *'Arafah*. One of them once said, "Fasting on the day of 'Âshoorâ' expiates the sins of an entire year, and fasting the day of 'Arafah leads to additional reward." This deluded individual does not realize that fasting in Ramadan and performing the five daily prayers are more important than fasting on the days of 'Âshoorâ' and 'Arafah. This fasting only expiates the sins between them if one avoids major sins. (Muslim)

The periods between one Ramadan and the next, and between one Friday prayer and the next, are not to be relied upon to expiate minor sins unless the major ones are also avoided. If one expects minor sins to be expiated, one must refrain from major ones.

How could one day of voluntary fasting expiate every major sin committed by someone – sins the person persists in and from which they have not repented? It is impossible. Suppose we accept that fasting the days of 'Âshoorâ' and 'Arafah expiates the sins committed in a year without exception. Still, the texts whose promise is subject to conditions and deterrents will apply to such people. Their persistence in committing major sins will be an additional deterrent preventing expiation.

If they did not persist in major sins, fasting and non-persistence would help towards expiation in general. Similarly, both fasting in Ramadan and the five daily prayers would help them expiate the minor sins, provided they also avoid major sins:

﴿إِن تَجۡتَنِبُواْ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنۡهَوۡنَ عَنۡهُ نُكَفِّرۡ عَنكُمۡ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمۡ ... ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ٣١)

﴿If you abstain from the major [sins] out of what you have been forbidden to do, We will erase your [minor] sins for you …﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 31)*

Deeming something as a cause for expiation does not negate that other factors may work alongside it to assist with the expiation. If other factors support the cause for expiation, it becomes stronger and more complete. The stronger the causes of expiation, the more effective and comprehensive it becomes.

Some people depend on the Prophet's narrations from his Lord:

«…I am the good assumption that My slaves have of Me; so let them assume of Me what they wish…» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbân, Ibn al-Mubârak, ad-Dârimi, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with an authentic chain of narration)

In other words, I will deal with them according to their expectations.

Undoubtedly, good assumptions should only come with excellence (in deeds). Those who do good may rightfully assume the best of their Lord: He will reward them for their excellence, accept their repentance, and not break His promise.

The evildoers who persist in committing major sins, oppression, and violations cannot justifiably assume that their Lord will be good to them. The same happens everywhere. Evil runaway slaves who have ceased to obey their masters do not assume they will be good to them. They do not ever associate their crime with good assumptions. The evildoers feel estranged due to the extent of their evil, but those assuming the best of their Lord obey Him the most.

This is just as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri mentions:

> The believers had good assumptions about their Lord, so their actions were good, and the wicked had evil assumptions about their Lord, so their actions were evil.[29]

How can some people assume their Lord will be good to them while running from Him, getting involved in what angers Him, and subjecting themselves to His curse? How can this be when they belittle and neglect His right over them, belittle His prohibitions, and persist in them? How can these people assume their Lord will be good to them while they challenge Him, fight His close friends, and ally with His enemies? They deny His attributes of perfection and assume the worst of how He and His Messenger (ﷺ) have described Him. They ignorantly believe that taking this literally is heresy and disbelief. How can they have these good assumptions about someone Who, as they believe, does not speak, command, forbid, or become pleased or angry?

Regarding those who doubt that He hears what is spoken secretly, He indicates:

﴿ وَذَٰلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَىٰكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة فُصِّلَت: ٢٣)

﴿But that thought of yours that you thought about your Lord has led to your ruin, and now you are among the losers.﴾ *(Fuṣṣilat 41: 23)*

It was evil to assume that Allah did not know much of what they did. This evil assumption ruined them. Same is the case with all those who deny His perfect attributes and majestic descriptions, and describe Him inappropriately. If such people think that that will admit them into paradise, it is delusion, self-deception, and Satan's deception. It is not a good assumption about the Lord.

Reflect on this point and reflect on how severely it is needed. How can a person have the certainty of meeting Allah yet ignore His commands and assume He will be good to them? Such people are 'certain' that Allah hears their words, sees their location, and knows what they do secretly and openly. They are 'certain' that none of their affairs is hidden from Him and that they will stand before Him and be asked about everything they did. Yet

these same people disobey Him, ignore His commands, do not fulfil His rights, and simultaneously assume He will be good to them! Is this anything but self-deception, delusion, and false hopes?

Abu Umâmah Sahl ibn Ḥunayf related:

«‘Urwah ibn az-Zubayr and I went to see Â’ishah.

She mentioned: You should have seen Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) when he was ill. I had six or seven dinars (a unit of currency). He instructed me to distribute them. I became preoccupied with his illness until Allah cured him.

He later asked her about them: What did you do? Did you distribute the six dinars?

She replied: By Allah, no. I was preoccupied with your illness.

He called for them and placed them in his hands, saying: What would the Prophet of Allah assume if he were to meet Allah when he still had these?»

There is another version:

«…What would Muhammad assume of his Lord if he were to meet Allah when he still had these?» (Recorded by Aḥmad and Ibn Ḥibbân with a reliable chain of narration; authenticated by al-Haythami)

O Allah! What can the major sinners and oppressors assume about Allah when they meet Him if they have been oppressing other people?

If it would benefit them to say, “We assume You will be good to us, and we feel secure that You will not punish an oppressor or a sinner,” let them do as they wish. Let them indulge in everything Allah has forbidden and assume He will be good to them and the fire will not touch them. *Subḥân Allâh* (glory be to Allah)! How far can such people’s delusions reach?

Prophet Ibrâheem (Abraham) asks:

﴿أَئِفْكًا ءَالِهَةً دُونَ ٱللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ فَمَا ظَنُّكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾﴾ (سورة الصافات: ٨٦-٨٧)

﴿Is it falsehood – gods other than Allah – that you seek? What, then, do you think of the Lord of the worlds﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 86-87)*

This means: If you have been worshipping others, what do you assume He will do with you when you meet Him?

The one who duly reflects on this point will realize that good assumptions about Allah are those accompanied by good actions. People are only driven to perform good acts because they assume their Lord will be good to them. He will repay and reward them for it and accept their good deeds. It was the good assumption that drove them to do good deeds. The better one's assumption about one's Lord is, the better one's actions become. It is foolish to have good assumptions yet follow (dubious) desires.

Shaddâd ibn Aws narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The wise take account of themselves and work for what is after death, but the foolish are led by their desires and wish (to achieve good or forgiveness) from Allah.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Aḥmad, Ibn Mâjah, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni; al-Ḥâkim graded it authentic but adh-Dhahabi mentioned weakness in the chain of narration)

In a nutshell, good assumptions are only those coupled with proper conviction in the cause of salvation. A good assumption coupled with conviction in the cause of destruction is erroneous.

We might argue that this assumption depends upon the wideness of Allah's mercy and forgiveness and His pardon and generosity. We could point out that His mercy precedes His anger, that punishing brings Him no benefit, and that forgiving does Him no harm…

The response to that is as follows. This is true; Allah is even more majestic, noble, generous, and merciful. You must also understand that He only applies these qualities to those who deserve them.

He is also described as having wisdom, power, vengeance, and severe strength. He punishes those who deserve punishment. If the basis of your good assumption of Him were merely His names and attributes, this (knowledge) would be shared by the righteous and the wicked, the believer and the disbeliever, and His ally and enemy alike. Criminals do not benefit from His names and attributes after incurring His wrath, subjecting themselves to His curse, diving into His prohibitions, and violating His sanctities.

Assuming good of Him benefits those who repent, regret, and desist. It benefits those who replace an evil deed with a good one and invest the remainder of their life in goodness and obedience. After this, they assume that He would be good to them. This is the correct meaning of assuming good. The first type of assumption is a mere delusion – and Allah is the source of strength.

Do not think this chapter is too long; everyone needs it seriously. Differentiate between assuming good of Allah and being deluded about Him.

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِۚ ... ﴿٢١٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢١٨)

﴿Those who believed and migrated and fought in the cause of Allah – it is they who have the hope of Allah's mercy...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 218)*

He gives hope to these people, not the sluggish, flagrant sinners.

﴿ ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا۟ ثُمَّ جَٰهَدُوا۟ وَصَبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١١٠)

﴿But verily your Lord – to those who migrated after persecution, then strove [in jihad] in Allah's cause and patiently persevered – verily your Lord, after all that, will be Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 110)*

He informs us that **after** people do what pleases Him, He is forgiving and merciful to them.

The knowledgeable place their hope in its proper place, but the ignorant and deluded place their hope where it does not belong.

# Between Allah's Pardon and Command

Many ignorant people depend on Allah's mercy, pardon, and generosity while neglecting His commands and prohibitions. They forget He is severe in punishment and that His punishment cannot be repelled from the criminals.

Those who depend upon His pardon yet persist in stubbornly sinning defy Allah.

Ma'roof mentions, "You have hope in the One you refuse to obey because you are foolish and you have been forsaken [by Allah]."

A scholar states:

> We are talking about the One Who has legislated cutting off the limbs in this world for stealing three dirhams [a unit of currency]. Do not feel secure that His punishment in the hereafter is different from this.

Another report states:

> Someone remarked to al-Ḥasan: We see you cry a lot.

He replied: I fear that He will throw me in the hellfire and does not care.[30]

Al-Ḥasan also mentions:

Some people were distracted by their wish for forgiveness until they exited this world without repentance. They would say: I assume my Lord will be good to me! They lied; if their assumption had been good, their actions would have been good.

Another report mentions:

A man once asked al-Ḥasan: O Abu Sa‘eed! How do we respond to the people we sit with who scare us until our hearts are on the verge of flying?

He replied: By Allah, it is better that you befriend people who scare you [in this world] until you feel secure [in the hereafter] than those who reassure you [in this world] until you are caught by the horrors [of the hereafter].[31]

Usâmah ibn Zayd narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«A person will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown into the fire of hell that causes his intestines to spill out. The person will run in circles in the fire, as a donkey circles the mill. The people of hell will surround this person and ask: What happened to you? Did you not order us to do good and forbid us from evil?

The person will reply: I used to order you to do good but not do good myself, and I forbade you from evil yet practised evil myself.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

«Abu Râfi‘ narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) passed by al-Baqee‘[32] and uttered: Woe to you. Woe to you.

I thought he was referring to me.

He explained: No, I am not. This is the grave of So-and-So. I sent him to take care of someone's family. He stole a garment (from them), so he was clothed in a similar one of fire just now.» (A reliable hadith recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasâ'i, Ibn Khuzaymah, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and al-Bayhaqi)

Anas ibn Mâlik narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«On the night of ascension (the night journey of the Prophet [ﷺ]), I passed by people whose lips were being cut with scissors of fire.

I asked: Who are these people?

They replied: Preachers from your Ummah in the worldly life. They used to order people to be righteous, yet forget to be righteous themselves. Have they no common sense?» (Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, al-Baghawi, and Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ; al-Baghawi graded it reliable)

Anas also reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«When I was taken up (on the night journey), I passed by people with nails of brass, with which they were scratching their faces and chests.

I enquired: Who are these people, Jibreel?

He replied: They used to 'eat the flesh of people'[33] and slander their honour.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, and Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ with an authentic chain of narration)

Anas also narrated:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) would very frequently say:

«يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ، ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ.»

*Yâ Muqallib al-Quloob! Thabbit qalbi 'alâ deenik.*

(O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart firm on Your religion.)

We enquired: O Messenger of Allah! We have believed in you and what you came with. Do you (still) fear for us?

He replied: Yes indeed. People's hearts are between the Two Fingers of ar-Raḥmân (the Most Gracious); He turns them as He wishes.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, and al-Ḥâkim with an authentic chain of narration)

Anas reported:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) asked Jibreel: Why do I never see Mikâ'eel laughing?

He replied: He has not laughed since the fire of hell was created.» (Recorded by Aḥmad; authenticated by al-'Irâqi and al-Bayhaqi)

Anas also narrated:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: Among the inmates of hell, a person who had led the most luxurious life in this world will be brought up on the Day of Resurrection and dipped in the fire.

He will be asked: O son of Adam! Did you ever experience any comfort? Did you happen to get any luxury?

He will reply: By Allah, no, my Lord.

Then one of the people of paradise who had experienced extreme misery in the life of this world will be dipped in paradise. Then he will be asked: O son of Adam! Did you ever experience any misery? Did you ever encounter difficulty?

He will say: By Allah, no my Lord, I neither experienced misery nor passed through hardship.» (Muslim)

Al-Barâ' ibn 'Âzib reported:

«We went out with the Prophet (ﷺ) for the funeral of a man from the Anṣâr. When we reached the grave, it had not yet been dug, so Allah's Messenger

(ﷺ) sat, and we sat around him as if birds were perched upon our heads. In his hand was a twig with which he poked the ground.

He raised his head and said two or three times: Seek refuge in Allah from the punishment of the grave.

He explained: When the believing slave is being separated from this world and approaching the hereafter, angels descend to him from the sky with radiant faces as if they were the sun. They bring shrouds from the shrouds of paradise and a fragrance from the fragrances of paradise, and they sit as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes forward, sits at the person's head, and exclaims: O reassured soul, come out. Come out to the forgiveness of Allah and His pleasure.

The soul flows out with ease, just as a drop pours out from the spout of a water skin, and he takes it. When he (the Angel of Death) takes the soul, these angels do not leave it in his hand for the blink of an eye before they take it and place it in that shroud and fragrance. There emanates a burst of the finest scent of musk on the face of the earth. They ascend with it and do not pass by a gathering of angels in the heavens without being asked: What is this fine scent?

They reply: So-and-So, the offspring of So-and-So – using the best names the person was ever called in the earthly life.

They eventually reach the lowest heaven and request for it to be opened for the person, and it is opened. The purest (angels) from each heaven provide an escort to the following heaven until they finally reach the seventh heaven.

There, Allah orders: Write My slave's record in *'Illiyeen*,[34] and return the soul to the earth, for from it I created them and into it I return them, and from it, I will pull them out again.

The soul is then returned to the earth, and two angels approach. They sit the person up and ask: Who is your Lord?

The reply is: My Lord is Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

They ask: What is your religion?

The reply is: My religion is Islam.

They ask: Who is this man who was sent to you?

The reply is: He is Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah.

They ask: How do you know this?

The reply is: I read the Book of Allah, so I believed in it and the truth of it.

A caller then calls from the sky: My slave has spoken the truth, so bring the furnishings of paradise and the garments of paradise. Open a door to paradise for this person.

Its comfort and fragrances come, and the person's grave is expanded as far as the eye can see.

The person is approached by a man with a beautiful face, beautiful clothes, and a fine fragrance who says: I am to give you glad tidings of something that will please you. This is the day that you were promised.

This person asks: Who are you? Your face is one that brings good.

He replies: I am your righteous deeds.

The person says: My Lord! Establish the Hour. My Lord! Establish the Hour so that I may return to my family and wealth.

When the disbelieving slave is being separated from this world and approaching the hereafter, angels with dark faces descend from the sky. With them are the shrouds. They sit as far as his eyes can see. Then the Angel of Death comes forth, sits at the person's head, and exclaims: O wicked soul, come out to the wrath of Allah and His anger.

It quickly spreads throughout the body, but it is snatched out, just as thorny skewers are yanked from wet wool. At this point, they do not leave it in the hand (of the Angel of Death) for the blink of an eye before they take it and place it in that shroud. There emanates from it the most putrid smell on the face of the earth. They ascend with it and do not pass by a gathering of angels without being asked: What is this horrible smell?

They reply: So-and-So, the offspring of So-and-So – using the foulest names the person was ever called in the earthly life. They request that the (gates) be opened for them (to ascend through the heavens), but they are not opened for them…

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) then recited:

﴿ … لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَٰبُ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ ٱلْجَمَلُ فِى سَمِّ ٱلْخِيَاطِ ۚ … ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٤٠)

﴿…the gates of heaven will not be opened for them, nor will they enter paradise, until a camel can pass through the eye of a needle…﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 40)*

Allah then orders: Write the person's record in *Sijjeen*,[35] in the lowest earth.

The soul is thrown downwards.

The Prophet (ﷺ) then recited:

﴿ … وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ ٱلطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِى بِهِ ٱلرِّيحُ فِى مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٣١)

﴿…Whoever ascribes partners to Him, it is as if he has fallen from heaven and been snatched up by birds or carried away by the wind to a far-off place.﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 31)*

The soul is then returned to his body, and two angels come and sit the person up and ask: Who is your Lord?

The reply is: I do not know.

They ask: What is your religion?

The reply is: I do not know.

They ask: Who is this man that was sent to you?

The reply is: I do not know.

A caller then calls from the sky: My slave has lied. So furnish him with [furnishings from] the fire, clothe him from [the garments of] the fire, and open for him a door to the fire.

Its heat and scorching wind rush in. The grave is tightened until the person's ribs interlock with each other.

The person is approached by a man with an ugly face, ugly clothes, and a rotten stench who declares: Receive the tidings of something that will grieve you. This is your day that you were promised.

The person asks: Who are you? Your face is one that brings evil…

He replies: I am your wicked deeds.

The person begs: My Lord! Do not establish the Hour.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, Ibn al-Mubârak, Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Ḥâkim, aṭ-Ṭayâlisi, al-Âjurri, al-Bayhaqi, and Abu Nu'aym)[36]

There is another section of the hadith:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: …Someone blind, deaf, and dumb is sent, in whose hand is a hammer. If he struck a mountain with it, it would turn to dust. He strikes with such a blow that it turns the person into dust, after which Allah returns the person to his former state. Then he strikes again, causing the person to scream with a cry that is heard by everything except the humans and jinn.

Al-Barâ’ added: Then a door is opened to the hellfire, and the furnishings of the fire are paved for this person.» (Recorded by Aḥmad)

Al-Barâ’ also related:

«While I was with Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ), he noticed a group of people and asked: What have they gathered for?

He was told: To dig a grave.

Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) was struck with fear and hurried past his Companions until he reached the grave. He then fell on his knees, so I came in front of him to see what he was doing.

He cried until the dirt below him was wet with his tears. Then he turned to us and warned us: O my brothers! Prepare for the likes of this day!» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *at-Târeekh*], Aḥmad, Ibn Mâjah, al-Mazzi, and al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi with a reliable chain)

Buraydah reported:

«Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) came out to us one day and called out three times: My people! Do you know the example of you and me?

They replied: Allah and His Messenger know best.

He explained: The example of you and me is that of some people who feared an enemy falling upon them, so they sent a man to scout for them. He saw the enemy and came to warn them, but he feared the enemy would catch him before he managed to warn them.

He loosened his clothing (and screamed) three times: My people! You are under attack! My people! You are under attack!» (Recorded by Aḥmad and ar-Râmahurmuzi; according to al-Haythami, its narrators are trustworthy)

Jâbir narrated:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: Every intoxicant is unlawful, and Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has promised that the person who drinks an intoxicant will be given a drink from the mud of insanity.

He was asked: What is the mud of insanity?

He replied: The sweat or the pus of the people of hell.» (Muslim)

Abu Dharr narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«I see what you do not see and hear what you do not hear. The heavens have groaned, and they have every right to groan, for even a space the width of four fingers has an angel prostrating upon it. If you knew what I know, you would certainly laugh little and cry much, and you would find no enjoyment with your wives in your beds. You would go out to the deserts pleading to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mâjah, and al-Ḥâkim with a reliable chain of narration)

Abu Dharr once remarked, "By Allah, I wish I were only a tree that is eaten."[37]

Ḥudhayfah narrated:

«We were with Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) at a funeral. He sat at the edge of the grave and repeatedly stared into it.

He explained: The believer is squeezed in it with a squeeze that eliminates the veins of his testicles, and it is filled with flames upon the disbeliever.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, 'Abdullâh ibn Aḥmad, and al-Bayhaqi; according to al-Haythami, its chain contains a weak narrator)

Jâbir related:

«We went out with Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) to the funeral of Sa'd ibn Mu'âdh. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed for him, he was placed in his grave, and it was levelled (with dirt). Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) made tasbeeḥ (repeating *Subḥân Allâh*), so we all did the same. Then he made *takbeer*

(saying *Allâhu akbar*, which means ‘Allah is the greatest’), so we all did the same.

Later, someone asked: O Messenger of Allah? Why did you make tasbeeḥ and then takbeer?

He replied: The grave of this righteous slave had become tight upon him before Allah widened it for him.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, al-Bayhaqi, and Ibn Is-ḥâq; its chain contains a questionable narrator, according to al-Haythami)

Abu Sa‘eed narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«When the funeral takes place and the body is carried by the men on their shoulders, if it was righteous, it says: Send me on. Send me on. If it was not righteous, it says: Woe to it; where are you taking it?

Its sound is heard by everything except human beings, and were they to hear it, they would be struck with terror.» (Bukhari)

Abu Umâmah reported that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«On the Day of Resurrection, the sun will draw near and be a mile away. The heat will intensify to such a degree that people’s heads will boil like kettles. They will sweat in proportion to their sins. The sweat will reach the ankles of some people, the legs of others, and the waists of others. There will also be those who are immersed in sweat.» (A sound hadith recorded by Aḥmad and aṭ-Ṭabarâni)

Ibn ‘Abbâs reported:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: How can I enjoy myself when the blower of the trumpet[38] has placed the trumpet in his mouth and lowered his head, listening for when he will be commanded to blow?

His Companions asked: What should we say?

He replied: Say:

«حَسْبُنَا اللهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ، عَلَى اللهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا.»

*Hasbunallâhu wa ni'mal-wakeel. 'Alallâhi tawakkalnâ.*

(Allah is sufficient for us, and He is the most excellent Trustee. Upon Allah, we have relied.)» (Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Ḥâkim; its chain is weak, but corroborating reports authenticate it)

Ibn 'Umar narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Whoever feels great within himself, or becomes arrogant in his walk, will meet Allah, the Most High, while He is angry with him.» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*], Aḥmad, and al-Ḥâkim with an authentic chain of narration)

Ibn 'Umar also narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Those who draw pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection. They will be told: Give life to what you have created.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Ibn 'Umar narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«When one of you dies, you are shown your place by night and by day. If you are one of the people of paradise, you will be with the people of paradise, but if you are one of the people of hell, you will be with the people of hell. You will be told: This will be your place when Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, resurrects you on the Day of Judgement.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«When the people of paradise have gone to paradise, and the people of hell are in the fire, death is brought forth until it is placed between paradise and hell. Then it is slaughtered, and a caller calls out: O people of paradise! Eternity without death! O people of hell! Eternity without death!

The people of paradise will become even more delighted and the people of hell will become even more grieved.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

«Ibn ‘Umar also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: If anyone buys a garment with ten dirhams, one of which is unlawful, Allah does not accept that person’s prayer while he is wearing it.

Ibn ‘Umar placed his fingers in his ears and exclaimed: May they both be deafened, if I did not hear the Prophet (ﷺ) say this.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbân, Ibn al-Jawzi, al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, and Ibn ‘Adiy with a very weak chain)

«‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: Those who abandon the prayer once due to intoxication, it is as if they possessed the entire world and everything in it, and then it was taken from them. If people abandon the prayer four times due to intoxication, Allah will undoubtedly make them drink from the mud of insanity.

Someone asked: What is the mud of insanity, O Messenger of Allah?

He replied: The pus of the people of hell.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, al-Mundhiri, Aḥmad Shâkir, and Ibn al-Mulaqqin with a reliable chain of narration)

Ibn ‘Umar narrated:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: If people drink wine once, Allah does not accept any prayer from them for forty days. If any of them repent, Allah accepts their repentance, but if they return (to it), Allah does not accept any prayer from them for (another) forty days.

I am unsure whether it was the third or fourth time when he warned us: If they return (to it), Allah will undoubtedly make them drink from the mud of insanity on the Day of Resurrection.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, and aṭ-Ṭayâlisi; according to Aḥmad Shâkir, its chain is authentic)[39]

Abu Moosâ narrated:

«Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: The one who dies while addicted to wine is given by Allah a drink from the river of Ghooṭah.

He was asked: What is the river of Ghooṭah?

He replied: A river that flows from the private parts of prostitutes. Even the smell of their private parts upsets the people of hell.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbân, al-Ḥâkim, and Abu Ya‘lâ)[40]

Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«People are presented on the Day of Resurrection three times. Two presentations are arguments and excuses. The third time is when the Books of Records[41] fly into the hands. Some take theirs with their right hand and others with their left hand.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mâjah, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni; its two chains are *mawqoof*)[42]

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood reported:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Beware of belittling sins, for they gather upon an individual until they destroy him.

The Prophet (ﷺ) gave them an example: It is like the example of those who stopped for rest in a desert, and their meal was brought. Each person went off and brought a branch until they collected a pile, lit their fire, and then roasted what they threw upon it.» (Recorded by Aḥmad and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with a chain containing two unknown narrators; however, another version has an authentic chain)

Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«The bridge is placed over the fire of hell, and I will be the first to cross. The supplication of the Messengers on that Day will be: O Allah! Keep us safe… Keep us safe…

Upon it are hooks like the thorns of *as-Sa‘dân*,[43] which snatch the people based on their deeds. Some of them are destroyed by their deeds, and some

of them are injured but then saved. After Allah has concluded judging between the slaves and wishes to remove from the fire those He wishes to have mercy on – from those who used to testify that none is worthy of worship except Allah – He commands the angels to remove them. They recognize them by the marks of prostration, for Allah has forbidden the fire to consume the mark of prostration of the descendants of Adam. They pull them out, and they have been severely burned. Water is poured upon them, known as the water of life, which makes them sprout the way seeds sprout in irrigated ground.» (Bukhari)

Abu Hurayrah also narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«The first people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection are three. The first will be a person who was martyred. The person will be brought forward and reminded of His blessings, which he will acknowledge.

Allah will ask: What did you do with them?

The person will reply: I fought for Your cause until I was killed.

Allah will say to the person: You are lying. You fought so people would say you were courageous, and they did.

Then the command will be given, and the person will be dragged on his face and thrown into hell.

The second person will be one who attained knowledge, taught it, and recited the Qur'an. That person will be brought forward and reminded of His blessings, which he will acknowledge.

Allah will ask: What did you do with them?

The person will reply: I attained knowledge for Your cause, taught it, and recited the Qur'an for Your sake.

Allah will tell the person: You are lying. You attained knowledge so people would say that you were a scholar, and they said so. You recited the Qur'an

so it would be said that you are a (skilful) reciter, and that was said.

Then the command will be given, and that person will be dragged on his face and thrown into hell.

The third person will be one whom Allah had lavished and given every form of wealth. This person will be brought forward and reminded of His blessings, which he will acknowledge.

Allah will ask: What did you do with them?

The person will reply: I spent my wealth in every way that would please You, for Your sake.

Allah will tell the person: You are lying. You spent so people would say you were generous, and they said so.

Then the command will be given, and that person will be dragged on his face and thrown into hell.» (Muslim)

In another version:

«These three are the first of Allah's creation whom the hellfire will sizzle with on the Day of Resurrection.»

I heard Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah say:[44]

> Just as the best of people are the Prophets, the worst of people are those liars who imitate them, those who falsely claim to be prophets. The best people after them are the scholars, martyrs, and philanthropists, those who are sincere. The worst people are those who imitate them. They pretend to be one of them while they are not.

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The one who has wronged another's wealth or honour should go seek forgiveness before being taken (to account) when there will be neither dinars nor dirhams. If the offender has righteous actions, they will be taken

and given to the wronged person. Otherwise, the victim's sins will be taken and placed upon the offender, who will then be thrown into the fire of hell.» (Bukhari)

Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Those who usurp a handspan of earth without due right will plummet with it to the seventh earth on the Day of Resurrection.» (Bukhari)

Abu Hurayrah reported:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: The fire, which the descendants of Adam ignite, is only one-seventieth part of the fire of hell.

They said: By Allah, even an ordinary fire would have been enough (to burn the people).

He said: It is sixty-nine degrees hotter than the fire in this world, each equivalent to its heat.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Mu'âdh narrated:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) advised me: Do not associate (anything) with Allah, even if you are killed and burned. Do not defy your parents, even if they command you to walk away from your family and wealth. Do not abandon a prescribed prayer deliberately, for those who do so have relinquished their security with Allah. Do not drink wine, for it is the head (basis) of every indecency. Do not dare to commit sins, for sins incur Allah's wrath.» (Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Haythami; it is authenticated by multiple corroborating reports)

There are many more hadiths on this topic. It is not proper for an honest person to forget them and indulge in sin carelessly, while holding onto the rope of hope (in Allah) and assuming that He will (unconditionally) be good to them.

Abul-Wafâ' ibn 'Aqeel warns:

> Be cautious of Him, and do not be deluded about Him. He has [legislated] cutting off the hand because of three dirhams. A woman entered hell because of a cat [that she starved]. A cloak engulfed in flames[45] upon the one who stole it despite him being martyred.

«Abu Mu‘âwiyah narrated from al-A‘mash, from Salmân ibn Maysarah, from Ṭâriq ibn Shihâb that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: A man entered paradise due to a fly, and a man entered the fire of hell due to a fly.

They asked: How is that, O Messenger of Allah?

He replied: Two men encountered some people who had an idol. They did not allow anyone to pass without making a sacrificial offering (to this idol). They told one of them: Sacrifice.

He replied: I do not have anything.

They told him: Sacrifice, even if it is a fly.

He sacrificed a fly, and they released him, but he entered the fire of hell.

They told the other man: Sacrifice.

He replied: I would never sacrifice anything for anyone except Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

They cut off his head (with a sword), and he entered paradise.

People utter this single word that throws them into hellfire farther than the distance between the east and west.» (Recorded by Aḥmad and Abu Nu‘aym)[46]

Perhaps, some deluded individuals depend on Allah’s blessings that they enjoy in their worldly life. Since these blessings are not revoked, they assume that they have attained Allah’s love and that what He will give them in the hereafter is better than that! This is mere delusion.

Yaḥyâ ibn Ghaylân narrated from Rishdeen ibn Sa‘d, from Ḥarmalah ibn ‘Imrân at-Tujeebi, from ‘Uqbah ibn Muslim, from ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Âmir:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: You may see that Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, is giving certain people what they love from the worldly life, even though they disobey Him. This is just a trap.

He recited this verse:

﴿فَلَمَّا نَسُوا۟ مَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَٰبَ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَرِحُوا۟ بِمَآ أُوتُوٓا۟ أَخَذْنَٰهُم بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ٤٤)

﴿So, when they forgot that of which they had been reminded, We opened unto them the gates of all [good] things until, when they were rejoicing in what they had been given, We seized them suddenly, and they were plunged into utter despair.﴾ *(al-An‘âm 6: 44)*» (An authentic hadith recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqi, al-Kharâ’iṭi, Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, Ibn ‘Abdul-Ḥakam, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni)

One of the *salaf* (the pious predecessors) mentions:

When you see that Allah is continually blessing you even though you are bent on disobeying Him, beware. This could be a trap that He gradually subjects you to:

﴿وَلَوْلَآ أَن يَكُونَ ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقُفًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَٰبًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِـُٔونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَزُخْرُفًا ۚ وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة الزُّخرُف: ٣٣-٣٥)

﴿Were it not that all humankind would follow one path [namely disbelief],[47] We would have granted to those who disbelieve in the

Most Gracious roofs of silver for their houses, and staircases [of silver] on which to climb, and doors [of silver] for their houses, and couches [of silver] on which to recline, and [all these things made] of gold too. But all of that is but enjoyments of the life of this world, and the hereafter with your Lord is [only] for those who fear Him.﴾ *(az-Zukhruf 43: 33-35)*

﴿فَأَمَّا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ إِذَا مَا ٱبۡتَلَىٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَأَكۡرَمَهُۥ وَنَعَّمَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّيٓ أَكۡرَمَنِ ١٥ وَأَمَّآ إِذَا مَا ٱبۡتَلَىٰهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيۡهِ رِزۡقَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّيٓ أَهَٰنَنِ ١٦﴾ (سورة الفجر: ١٥-١٦)

﴾As for man, when his Lord tests him by bestowing generous bounties upon him, he says: My Lord has honoured me; but when He tests him by restricting his provision, he says: My Lord has humiliated me.﴿ *(al-Fajr 89: 15-16)*

In other words, He has not honoured everyone whose provisions He has blessed and expanded. Likewise, He has not humiliated everyone He has tried and whose provisions He has restricted. He may afflict one person with favours and honour another with affliction.

It is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah grants this world both to those He loves and those He does not love, but He only grants faith to those He loves.» (Part of a hadith recorded by Aḥmad, al-Baghawi, al-Ḥâkim, and Abu Nu‘aym; authenticated by al-Albâni)

One of the salaf indicated that some people might be led on by Allah’s favours without realizing it. Others may be deluded by His concealment of them without realizing it. There may also be others who are deceived by people’s praise of them without realizing it.

# Deluded People

The most deluded people are deceived by this world and its immediate, short-lived pleasures. So they prefer it to the hereafter and accept it instead of the hereafter. This may happen to such an extent that one of them may say, “This world is cash, but the hereafter is credit, and cash is better than credit!”

Another may prefer a speck that is present than a pearl that is promised.

Another may say that the delights of this world are certain, but the delights of the hereafter are doubtful. I do not leave what is certain for what is doubtful!

This is one of the greatest deceptions of Satan. Even the illiterate beasts are more reasonable than these people. When a beast is scared that something will harm it, it does not approach it, even if it is injured. Some of these people may walk to their doom wavering between believing and belying!

If such people believe in Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ), and His appointment and recompense, they will suffer the greatest regret. That is

because they acted this way despite their knowledge. If they do not believe in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), they are even more astray!

Here is the answer to the one who claims that cash is better than credit. If cash and credit are equal, cash is better. If they have different values and credit is greater and superior, then credit is better!

From beginning to end, this entire world is like a single breath from the breaths of the hereafter.

Al-Mustawrid ibn Shaddâd reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«This world, compared to the hereafter, is just like when you dip your finger into the sea. See how much (water) remains on your finger.» (An authentic hadith recorded by Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhi)[48]

Preferring this cash (the world) over that credit (hereafter) is sheer ignorance and one of the greatest deceptions. If this (the water remaining on the finger after dipping it into the sea) is the entire world in proportion to the hereafter, what is the length of a person's life in proportion to the hereafter? Which one do sensible people consider superior? Do they prefer the immediate short term, depriving themselves of permanent good in the hereafter? Or do they abandon something minor and lowly that will soon end to attain something priceless, unimaginable, immeasurable, and unending?

For the one who states, "I do not leave what is certain for what is doubtful," this is the response, "You are either doubtful or certain of Allah's promise and threat, and the truthfulness of His Messenger [ﷺ]. If you are certain, what you have abandoned is only an immediate, transient speck in exchange for a matter that is certain, unending, and free of doubt."

If you are doubtful, review the verses of your Lord that indicate His existence, power, will, and oneness. Consider the truthfulness of His Messengers in what they have informed us about Allah. Be objective and stand for Allah by reflecting or investigating until it becomes clear to you

that what the Messengers came with on the authority of Allah is the absolute truth with no doubt whatsoever. Be objective; accept that the Creator of this universe, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, is exalted and glorified above contradicting what His Messengers have informed us about Him.

Whoever attributes Him to other than that has belied and insulted Him, and has denied His sovereignty and Lordship. Sound-minded individuals would never think that the True King is incapable or ignorant. It is impossible that He would not know anything, not hear, see or speak, not command or forbid, not reward or punish, or not honour or humiliate whomsoever He wishes. It is impossible that He would not send His Messengers to the corners of His kingdom and that He would not take care of His followers and leave them to wander with no purpose.

This would debase the sovereignty of any human monarch, and it would be unbefitting of any sovereign. How can it be plausible to attribute such things to the True and Ultimate King?

Individuals should reflect on their condition, from when they began as a drop of semen until their fashioning was completed. It should become abundantly clear that it would not befit Him to neglect them. He takes care of them, carrying them through these conditions and directing them through these stages. He would not leave them without purpose, without commanding, forbidding, and informing them of His rights over them, and without rewarding or punishing them.

If people were to reflect on this, everything they see and do not see would be evidence of the oneness (of Allah), prophethood, and the Appointed Day. Everything would prove that the Qur'an is Allah's word.

We have already discussed the evidence for this in the book *at-Tibyân fee Aqsâm al-Qur'ân*, with reference to His oath:[49]

﴿فَلَآ أُقۡسِمُ بِمَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ٣٨ وَمَا لَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ٣٩ إِنَّهُۥ لَقَوۡلُ رَسُولٖ كَرِيمٖ ٤٠﴾ (سورة الحاقة: ٣٨-٤٠)

﴿Verily, I swear by all that you can see and by all that you cannot see that verily it [the Qur'an] is a word conveyed by a noble Messenger.﴾ *(al-Ḥâqqah 69: 38-40)*

We have also discussed an aspect of this with respect to His statement:[50]

﴿وَفِيٓ أَنفُسِكُمۡۚ أَفَلَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ٢١﴾ (سورة الذاريات: ٢١)

﴿And also in your own selves. Will you not then see?﴾ *(adh-Dhâriyât 51: 21)*

This explains that human beings themselves are evidence of the existence of their Creator, His oneness, and the truthfulness of His Messengers. They are also evidence that He possesses perfect qualities.

It is now clear that squandering souls are deluded in either case: whether they believe and are certain, or they belie and have doubts.

If you were to say, "How can firm conviction, free from any doubt in the Appointed Day, paradise, and hellfire, make any sense if there are no actions to prove this? What about people who know they will stand the following day before a sovereign to face the severest punishment or receive the greatest honour? Would they logically spend the night distracted and oblivious without thinking about or preparing for it?"

The response: By Allah, this appropriate question applies to most of these people. The combination of these matters is one of the most remarkable things, and this absence (of actions) has several causes.

The first cause is weakness in knowledge and lack of certainty. Those who presume that their own knowledge is impeccable make the most corrupt and fallacious claim.

Prophet Ibrâheem asked his Lord to show him the dead being resurrected before his eyes, when he learned of the Lord's ability to do so. By witnessing this, he wanted to increase his conviction and knowledge of the unseen.[51]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The one merely informed (of a matter) is not like the one who actually witnessed it.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, Ibn Ḥibbân, Abu ash-Shaykh, al-Ḥâkim, al-Bazzâr, and Ibn Adiy; authenticated by Ibn Ḥibbân, al-Ḥâkim, and adh-Dhahabi)

Suppose there is weak (vague) knowledge and forgetfulness, or that knowledge is absent from the heart most of the time, or much of it is due to preoccupation with distractions. Then that is bolstered by:

- One's (wayward) nature
- The onslaught of desires
- The captivation of lust
- The enticement of the self
- Satan's deception
- Impatience over the promise (of Allah)
- Long hopes
- Sleep of heedlessness
- Love of the immediate
- Far-fetched justifications
- Customary habits

Nothing can keep one's faith strong at this point except the One Who holds the heavens and earth from collapsing. For this reason, people differ

in their faith and deeds; some have only the absolute tiniest speck (of faith) in their hearts.

All this is due to the weakness of insight and patience. For this reason, Allah (□) has praised those who have patience and certainty, and He has made them the imams of the religion:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢٤)

﴿We made some of them leaders, guiding people by Our command, because they were patient and steadfast, and they believed with certainty in Our revelations.﴾ *(as-Sajdah 32: 24)*

# The Difference between Delusion and Assuming Good

The difference between delusion and assuming good is now clear. If assuming good drives one to act (positively) and encourages a person to perform beneficial deeds, it is the correct assumption. If assuming good leads to lethargy and drowning in sins, it amounts to delusion.

Assuming good is the essence of being hopeful, so if someone's hopefulness is a deterrent (from evil) and guides the person towards obedience, this hope is correct. A person who is hopeful but lazy is deluded, and this type of hope leads to negligence.

Suppose someone owns a piece of land, hoping it would produce some benefit. But then he neglects it; he does not plant seeds or plough the field. He simply remains optimistic that it will be fruitful without ploughing, planting, irrigating, or taking care of it. Such a person would be considered the silliest of fools.

The same irrationality applies to other (highly improbable) situations. A couple may have good assumptions and strong hopes to have a child without intercourse. Some people might think that they will become the

most knowledgeable of their time without seeking knowledge and being direly keen to do so, and so on.

Likewise are those with good assumptions and strong hopes that they will attain the high station (of paradise) and eternal bliss without obedience or drawing near to Allah by abiding by His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. From Allah comes all success.

Allah (ﷻ) mentions:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِۚ ... ﴿٢١٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢١٨)

﴿Those who believed and migrated and fought in the cause of Allah – it is they who have the hope of Allah's mercy…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 218)*

Notice how He indicates their hope by mentioning their participation in these acts of obedience!

The deluded ones claim that they can hope for Allah's mercy even if they:

- Neglect His rights
- Ignore His commands
- Transgress against His slaves
- Dare to violate His sanctity

The necessary nuance in this matter is that hope and good assumptions are only linked with seeking the means determined by Allah's wisdom in His legislation, decree, rewards, and honouring. People should first practise these and **then** assume that their Lord will be good to them. They should hope in Him **without** forsaking their good deeds. Such people may also hope that He will make their good deeds a bridge that leads to what benefits

them. Likewise, He will divert from them whatever may oppose or invalidate their effects.

One must know that hope necessitates three things:

1. Loving what one has hope in.
2. Being fearful of missing it.
3. Striving to attain it as best as one can.

Hope that is not coupled with any of these is merely wishful thinking.

Hope is one thing and wishes are another, for anyone hopeful is also scared. Those fearful while travelling on a path quicken their pace due to the fear of not arriving.

Abu Hurayrah reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Those who fear proceed quickly and whoever does so reaches the destination. The merchandise of Allah is expensive. The merchandise of Allah is paradise.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Bukhari [in *at-Târeekh*], al-Ḥâkim, 'Abd ibn Ḥumayd, and al-Baghawi with a weak chain of narration; a corroborating report has a reliable chain of narration)

Allah determined that both hope and fear belong to those who perform righteous deeds. Through this, we know that hope and beneficial fear accompany good deeds:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ هُم مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِم مُّشْفِقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِـَٔايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَآ ءَاتَوا۟ وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ يُسَـٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَـٰبِقُونَ ﴿٦١﴾﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ٥٧-٦١)

﴿Verily, those who are filled with reverent awe of their Lord, and who believe in the revelations of their Lord, and who do not ascribe partners to their Lord, and who give what they give [of charity], their hearts filled with apprehension, knowing that they will return to their Lord, those are the ones who hasten to do good deeds, and they are foremost in attaining them.﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 57-61)*

'Â'ishah (□) narrated:

«I asked Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) about this verse: Are they those who drink wine, fornicate, and steal?

He replied: No, O daughter of aṣ-Ṣiddeeq! They are those who fast, pray, and give charity, yet fear that these would not be accepted from them. These are the ones who hasten to do good deeds.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mâjah, aṭ-Ṭabari, al-Ḥâkim, and Aḥmad with a disconnected chain of trustworthy narrators)[52]

Abu Hurayrah also narrated this.

Allah (□) has described the prosperous as those who show excellence yet are fearful,[53] and the unfortunate as those who do evil yet feel secure.[54] Whoever reflects on the conditions of the Companions (□) will find them exhibiting the highest quality of actions, yet having the highest degree of fear. We have combined security with shortcomings or, rather, with outright negligence.

Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq used to say, "I wish I were a hair in the side of a believing slave."[55] He also used to grab hold of his tongue and say, "This has ruined me."[56] He used to weep a great deal and would say, "Cry. If you cannot cry, feign crying."[57]

Whenever he stood for prayer, he became like a column due to the fear of Allah.[58] A bird was once brought to him. He handled it and exclaimed, "No prey is caught and no tree is cut unless it is due to its negligence of glorifying [Allah]."[59]

When he was dying, he told ‘Â’ishah, “Daughter! I purchased this robe, cow, and slave using the wealth of the Muslims, so rush [and give] them to Ibn al-Khaṭṭâb.”[60]

He would also mention, “By Allah, I certainly wish I was this tree that is eaten.”

Qatâdah mentions, “I have heard that Abu Bakr said: I wish I were a green pasture which is eaten by the cattle.”[61]

This is how ‘Umar (□) was, when he recited Soorat aṭ-Ṭoor *(52)*. He cried when he reached the following verse:

﴿إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَٰقِعٌ ۝٧﴾ (سورة الطور: ٧)

﴿Verily, the punishment of your Lord will surely come to pass.﴾ *(aṭ-Ṭoor 52: 7)*

His weeping became so intense that he became ill, and people came and visited him.

When he was dying, he said to his son: Woe to you! Place my cheek on the ground; perhaps He will have mercy on me.

He exclaimed: Woe to my mother if I am not forgiven.

After repeating this three times, he died.[62]

Another report mentions:

During his nightly recitation, he [‘Umar] would come to a verse that would frighten him. He would remain in his house for days with people visiting him because they thought he was sick.

On his face were two black lines from the crying.

Ibn ‘Abbâs once said to him [‘Umar]: Allah has given us lands because of you, brought the conquests because of you, and done such and such…

He replied: I wish to be saved with no reward or sin.[63]

Whenever ‘Uthmân ibn ‘Affân stood by a grave, he cried until his beard became wet.[64] He would say: If I were between paradise and hell, not knowing to which I would be taken, I would choose to become ashes rather than know to which I would be taken.[65]

‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib frequently wept, and his fear would intensify for two reasons – having long hopes and following desires. He states:

Long hopes cause one to forget the hereafter. Following desires prevents one from recognizing the truth. This world is departing fast, the hereafter is approaching, and each has its children. Be one of the children of the hereafter, and do not be one of the children of this world. Today there is action and no judgement, but tomorrow there is judgement and no action.[66]

Abu ad-Dardâ’ mentions:

The greatest fear I have for myself on the Day of Judgement is to be asked: O Abu ad-Dardâ’! You knew many things; how did you act upon your knowledge?

If you knew what you would meet after death, you would enjoy neither the meal you were eating nor the drink you were drinking. Nor would you enter a house to seek shade. In fact, you would walk out to the deserts striking your chests, crying over yourselves, and moaning: I wish I were a tree that is bitten and devoured.[67]

Below the eyes of Ibn ‘Abbâs were marks resembling worn-out laces from the tears.

Abu Dharr used to say, “Oh, I wish I were just a tree that is eaten. I wish I were never created.” He was once offered charity, and he remarked:

We have a goat that we milk, donkeys to transport us, a freed slave who serves us, and an extra robe – and I fear being called to account

for it.

One night, Tameem ad-Dâri recited Soorat al-Jâthiyah *(45)*. When he reached the following verse, he continued repeating it and crying until the morning:

﴿أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱجْتَرَحُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ سَوَآءً مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ ۚ ... ﴿٢١﴾﴾ (سورة الجاثية: ٢١)

﴿Do those who commit evil deeds think that We will deal with them as We deal with those who believe and do righteous deeds, and that they will be alike in their living and their dying?...﴾ *(al-Jâthiyah 45: 21)*

Abu ‘Ubaydah ‘Âmir ibn al-Jarrâḥ would lament, “I wish I were just a lamb and that my owners would slaughter me, eat my flesh, and drink my broth.”

There is a plethora of such reports.

In his authentic collection, Imam Bukhari gave the following title to a chapter: “A believer fearing that his good deeds may be annulled (lost) without him noticing.”

Ibrâheem at-Taymi mentions, “I have never measured my words against my actions without fearing that I am a disbeliever.”

Ibn Abi Mulaykah states:

> I met thirty Companions of the Prophet [ﷺ]; each feared they were hypocrites. Not one of them would say: I have the faith of Jibreel and Mikâ’eel.

Al-Ḥasan mentions, “No one fears Him except a believer, and no one feels secure from Him except a hypocrite.”

A report mentions:

> ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb used to ask Ḥudhayfah: I urge you to tell me, by Allah, did Allah’s Messenger [ﷺ] mention my name to you as one of the hypocrites?
>
> He would respond: No, and I will not clear anyone after you of hypocrisy.

I heard our Shaykh[68] say that he (Ḥudhayfah) does not mean he will not clear anyone but him (‘Umar) of hypocrisy. He means that he will not open this door upon himself; he will not clear (of hypocrisy) every person who asks him the same question.

I remarked to him that this is similar to the Prophet’s answer to the person asking him to supplicate for him to be one of the seventy thousand who enter paradise without reckoning:

«‘Ukâshah has beaten you to it.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

It does not imply that ‘Ukâshah alone was more deserving of this than other Companions. It means that if he had supplicated for him, another person would have stood up (and asked), and then another. This would have opened the door (to everyone), and perhaps someone would have stood who did not deserve to be among them. Hence, it was better to refrain – and Allah knows best.

# Harms of Sin and Disobedience

Let us return to our discussion on the cures for the diseases that will ruin people's worldly lives and their hereafter if they persist. We should know that sin and disobedience result in absolute harm. They harm the hearts like poison harms the bodies, even if the degree of harm varies. Which evil or disease in this world and the hereafter is not caused by sin and disobedience?

What sent our parents (Adam and Ḥawwâ' [Eve]) from paradise, the abode of bliss, delight, joy, and cheer, into the abode of pains, sorrows, and calamities?

What removed Iblees (Satan) from his domain in the heavens, and exiled and cursed him? What stained him inside and out until his image was the ugliest and his heart was most repulsive? What replaced his closeness (to Allah) with distance, Allah's mercy with a curse, beauty with ugliness, and paradise with a blazing fire? What replaced his faith with disbelief and loyalty to the praiseworthy Guardian (Allah) with the greatest enmity and defiance? What replaced his chanting of Allah's glory with uttering disbelief, polytheism, lies, false testimonies, and indecency? Why did he trick people into believing that disbelief, sin, and transgression are part of faith? All this made him most despicable in the sight of Allah. What made

him fall from His favour to the lowest depths? What brought upon him the Lord's anger, which debased him and evoked His hatred? What made him fall (in disgrace), making him the leader of every rebellious criminal? Why did he accept this (evil) leadership for himself after his former devotion and prestige? We seek refuge in You, O Allah, from disobeying Your command and practising what You forbid.

What drowned everyone on the earth when the water rose over the tops of the mountains?[69]

What sent the blasting winds upon the people of 'Âd,[70] which cast their corpses upon the earth's surface as if they were uprooted palms? What made them destroy everything when they passed over their homes, farms, plants, and animals, causing them to be a lesson for the nations until the Day of Judgement?

What sent the brutal scream upon the people of Thamood,[71] which ripped their hearts within them and killed every last one of them?

What destroyed the town of Prophet Looṭ (Lot) until the angels could hear their dogs whimpering? What overturned it upon them, destroying them all? What followed that with stones that showered from the skies upon them? What brought about these punishments that were not combined for any other nation, the likes of which were promised for their brethren (in sin)? These are not far from the wrongdoers, as Allah (ﷻ) mentions:

﴿ ... وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٍ ﴿٨٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٨٣)

﴿…nor are they ever far from the evildoers.﴾ *(Hood 11: 83)*

What sent upon the people of Shu'ayb the clouds of punishment to hover over them that later showered blazing fire from above?[72]

What drowned Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and his people in the sea and transported their souls to the hellfire?[73] Their bodies were drowned, and their souls were burned.

What made the earth swallow Qâroon along with his home, wealth, and family?[74]

What destroyed the nations after Nooḥ (Noah) with various punishments and completely decimated them?

What destroyed the people mentioned in Soorat Yâ Seen with the brutal scream that annihilated every last one?[75]

What unleashed people of great might upon the Children of Israel who plundered and burned their homes, killed their men, enslaved their women and children, and ransacked their property? What unleashed them upon the Children of Israel a second time to reap destruction on whatever (little) remained?[76] What elicited upon them many different punishments? Once, it was killing, enslavement, and the corruption of their lands. The next time it was oppressive kings, and another time they were turned into pigs and apes.[77] Finally, the Lord mentions:

﴿ ... لَيَبۡعَثَنَّ عَلَيۡهِمۡ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ مَن يَسُومُهُمۡ سُوٓءَ ٱلۡعَذَابِۗ ... ﴿١٦٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ١٦٧)

﴿…He would certainly send against them, until the Day of Resurrection, people who would subject them to grievous torment…﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 167)*

Al-Waleed ibn Muslim narrated to us from Ṣafwân ibn 'Amr, from 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Jubayr ibn Nufayr that his father said:

> After Cyprus was conquered, its captives were divided. Some were crying. I saw Abu ad-Dardâ' sitting alone, crying. I asked him: Abu ad-Dardâ'! What makes you cry on a day Allah has given power to Islam and its people?
>
> He replied: Woe to you, Jubayr! How insignificant the creation is to Allah when people ignore His commands! This mighty, powerful

nation ruled over the land only recently. It abandoned the command of Allah and suffered from what you now see.[78]

Shu‘bah ibn ‘Amr ibn Murrah reported that Abul-Bakhtari narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«People will not be destroyed until they bring it upon themselves.» (Recorded by ‘Ali ibn al-Ja‘d, Aḥmad, and Abu Dâwood with an authentic chain of narration)

Umm Salamah narrated:

«Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: When sins become apparent in my Ummah, Allah will directly send a punishment that befalls the whole nation.

She asked: O Messenger of Allah! Will there not be some righteous people among them on that day?

He replied: Indeed, there will be.

She asked: What will happen to them?

He replied: They will be struck with whatever strikes the people. Then they will proceed to the forgiveness of Allah and (His) pleasure.» (Recorded by Aḥmad with a weak chain of narration; however, it is strengthened by corroborating reports)

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri reported in *Marâseel al-Ḥasan* that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«This Ummah will continue to be protected by Allah and remain in His care as long as its scholars do not side with its leaders, its pious do not commend its wicked, and its evil-doers do not humiliate its virtuous. If they do that, Allah will remove His (protective) Hand from them and send upon them their tyrants who will inflict the worst punishment upon them. Then Allah will plague them with poverty and need.»[79]

Thawbân narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«A person is certainly deprived of sustenance because of a sin he has committed.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Mâjah, al-Baghawi, aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi, and al-Ḥâkim; some narrators in its chain are unknown)

Thawbân reported:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: Soon the nations will invite (one another) against you from every horizon, just as eaters invite (others) to share their food.

We asked: O Messenger of Allah! Is it because we will be few on that day?

He replied: You will be plenty on that day like the foam of the oceans. The fear (of you) will be removed from the hearts of your enemies, and weakness will be cast into your hearts.

They asked: What is this weakness?

He replied: Loving this world and hating death.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, Abu Nu'aym, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with two reliable chains of narration)

Anas narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«When I was taken up (on the night journey), I passed by people with nails of brass, with which they scratched their faces and chests. I asked: Who are these people, O Jibreel?

He replied: They used to 'eat the flesh' of people and slander their honour.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, and Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ with an authentic chain of narration)

Abu Hurayrah reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«At the end of time, people who manipulate religion for worldly gains will emerge, dressed in sheep's clothing to persuade the people. Their tongues are sweeter than sugar, yet their hearts are the hearts of wolves.

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, will ask: Are they deceived about Me? Have they dared to (challenge) Me? I Myself have sworn that I will send upon them a tribulation that stuns even the most prepared of them.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi with a weak chain of narration; also recorded by al-Baghawi, Ibn al-Mubârak, and Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr)

Ja‘far ibn Muhammad narrated from his father and grandfather that ‘Ali (□) states:

> A time will come over the people when nothing will remain of Islam but its name and nothing from the Qur’an but its words. Their mosques on that day will be filled, but they will be empty of guidance. Their scholars will be the worst creatures under the sky. From them, the tribulation will emerge, and to them, they will return.[80]

Simâk ibn Ḥarb reports from ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ibn ‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood from his father, “When fornication and usury [*ribâ*] become apparent in a town, Allah authorizes its destruction.”[81]

Al-Ḥasan mentions:

> When people flaunt knowledge and abandon action, love one another with words but hate each other at heart, and sever family ties, then Allah curses them at that point, so He deafens and blinds them.[82]

Ibn ‘Umar (□) reported:

«Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) turned to us and said: There are five things with which you will be tested. I ask Allah to grant you refuge from living to see them. When fornication is committed openly in a community, it will be afflicted with plagues and diseases that did not exist for its ancestors. When people cheat (others) with weights and measures, they will be afflicted with famine, poverty, and tyranny of the rulers. When people refuse to pay zakat (obligatory charity) on their property, rain will be withheld from the sky. If it were not for the animals, they would no longer receive rain. When people breach the covenant with Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), He will enable their

enemies to overpower them and take some of what is in their hands. If their leaders do not rule according to the Book of Allah and do not seek good from what Allah has revealed, He will cause them to fight one another.» (Recorded by Ibn Mâjah; authenticated by al-Albâni; also recorded by Abu Nu‘aym with a weak chain and by al-Ḥâkim with a good chain)

‘Amr ibn Murrah narrated that Sâlim ibn Abul-Ja‘d heard from Abu ‘Ubaydah ibn ‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood from his father that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«When people before you committed a sin, other people would come and rebuke and warn them. The next day, the latter would sit, eat, and drink with them as if they had not seen the former sinning the previous day. When Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, saw this, He plagued their hearts with animosity for one another. He cursed them through the tongue of His Prophets Dâwood and ‘Eesâ ibn Maryam. That was due to their sin and transgression. I swear by Him in Whose Hand is Muhammad’s soul, you will surely enjoin good, forbid evil, restrain the foolish, and enforce the truth. Otherwise, Allah will certainly seal your hearts against one another and curse you as He cursed them.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, Abu Dâwood, Ibn Mâjah, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni)[83]

Ibrâheem ibn ‘Amr aṣ-Ṣan‘âni mentions:

> The Lord revealed to Yoosha‘ ibn Noon: I am destroying forty thousand righteous people and sixty thousand wicked ones.
>
> He asked: My Lord! These are wicked, but what about the righteous?
>
> He replied: They did not become angry over My anger, and they used to eat and drink with them [the wicked].[84]

Abu ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul-Barr reports from Abu Hizzân:

> Allah sent two angels to a town [and commanded]: Destroy it and everyone in it.

They found a man in it standing in prayer in the mosque, so they implored: Our Lord! Your slave So-and-So is in there praying.

He ordered: Destroy it and destroy him with it, for his face never grimaced once for My sake.[85]

Al-Ḥumaydi mentions from Sufyân ibn ‘Uyaynah:

Sufyân ibn Sa‘eed narrated from Mas‘ar: An angel was commanded to annihilate a town, and he pointed out: My Lord! In it is So-and-So, the worshipper.

Allah revealed to him: Begin with him, for his face did not grimace even once for My sake.

Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ reports:

Anas ibn Mâlik went with another man to see ‘Â’ishah.

The man asked: O Mother of the Believers! Tell us about earthquakes.

She replied: When people consider fornication lawful, drink wine, and beat musical instruments, Allah becomes jealous above His heavens, so He says to the earth: Shake with them.

They will then repent and desist, or else He will demolish it over them.

He asked: O Mother of the Believers! Is this a punishment for them?

She replied: No, it is a warning and mercy for the believers, and a thrashing, punishment, and wrath upon the disbelievers.

Anas remarked: I have not heard a report, after those of Allah’s Messenger [ﷺ], that I find more satisfying.

Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ recorded this mursal hadith:

«The earth quaked during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), so he placed his hand on it and said to it: Be calm, for your time has not yet come.

He then turned to his Companions and warned them: Your Lord is rebuking you, so admit your faults to Him.

It then quaked again during the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, so he warned: My people! This earthquake has only come as a result of something you have done. I swear by the One Who holds my soul in His Hand, if it happens again, I will never live with you in it again.» (Recorded and authenticated by al-Ḥâkim)

> In *Manâqib 'Umar*,[86] Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ states:
>
> The earth quaked during the time of 'Umar, so he struck it with his hand and asked: What is the matter with you? What is wrong with you? It would have already told us its news if it were the resurrection. I heard Allah's Messenger [ﷺ] say: When the Day of Resurrection arrives, there will be no arm's length or handspan of it that will not speak.[87]
>
> Imam Aḥmad reports from Ṣafiyah:
>
> An earthquake occurred in Madinah during the time of 'Umar, so he warned them: My people! What is this? How quickly you have strayed! If it happens again, I will not live with you in it.
>
> Ka'b mentions:
>
> The earth only quakes when sins are committed upon it, causing it to tremble from fear of the Lord, the Magnificent, looking upon it.
>
> Another narration states:
>
> 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez wrote to the provinces: These quakes are a thing by which Allah censures the people. I am writing to the

provinces so that the people may go out on such a day of such a month and those who possess anything should donate it. Allah states:

﴿قَدۡ أَفۡلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ١٤ وَذَكَرَ ٱسۡمَ رَبِّهِۦ فَصَلَّىٰ ١٥﴾ (سورة الأعلى: ١٤-١٥)

﴿He will indeed attain true success who purifies himself and reflects upon the sublime names of his Lord, so he prays.﴾ *(al-A'lâ 87: 14-15)*

Say, like Adam did:

﴿... رَبَّنَا ظَلَمۡنَآ أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمۡ تَغۡفِرۡ لَنَا وَتَرۡحَمۡنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٢٣﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٢٣)

﴿…Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will certainly be among the losers.﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 23)*

Say, like Nooḥ did:

﴿... وَإِلَّا تَغۡفِرۡ لِي وَتَرۡحَمۡنِيٓ أَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٤٧﴾ (سورة هود: ٤٧)

﴿…Unless You forgive me and have mercy on me, I will be among the losers.﴾ *(Hood 11: 47)*

Say, like Yoonus did:

﴿... لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنتَ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ إِنِّي كُنتُ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٨٧﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٨٧)

﴿…There is no god worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You; I have indeed done wrong.﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 87)*

Al-Aswad ibn 'Âmir reported from Abu Bakr, from al-A'mash, from 'Aṭâ' ibn Abi Rabâḥ that Ibn 'Umar narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«When people hoard dinars and dirhams, trade via *al-ʻeenah*, hold firmly onto the tails of cattle, and abandon striving in the way of Allah, Allah will send upon them an affliction that He will not remove until they return to their religion.» (Recorded by Aḥmad; authenticated by Ibn Taymiyah)[88]

In another version, Ibn ʻUmar narrated:

«I have seen us (in a condition) where no one had more right over the dinars and dirhams than any other Muslim, and I have heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) say: When people hoard dinars and dirhams, trade via al-ʻeenah, cease to strive in the way of Allah, and hold firmly onto the tails of cattle, Allah will send upon them from the heavens an affliction which He will not remove until they return to their religion.» (Recorded by Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ)

Al-Ḥasan mentions, "By Allah, tribulation is nothing but a punishment from Allah upon the people."

A narration mentions:

> One of the Prophets of the Children of Israel looked at what had happened to them from Nebuchadnezzar.[89] He stated: Due to what our hands have earned, You sent upon us someone who does not know You and has no mercy for us.
>
> Nebuchadnezzar asked Prophet Dânyâl: What has empowered me over your people?
>
> He replied: The greatness of your sin and my people wronging themselves.

ʻAmmâr ibn Yâsir heard from Ḥudhayfah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«When Allah wishes to punish a people, He puts the children to death, makes the women's wombs infertile, sends down the punishment, and no one receives mercy.» (Recorded by Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ and ash-Sheerâzi; al-Albâni graded it weak)

Mâlik ibn Deenâr states:

> Allah says: I am Allah, owner of the kings. The hearts of the kings are in My Hands. I make them merciful to the one who obeys Me and ruthless to the one who disobeys me. Do not busy yourselves in cursing the kings. Instead, repent to Me and I will make them compassionate with you.[90]

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri reports:

> When Allah wishes well for a people, He places their affairs with the wise ones and spoils with those who are lenient. When Allah wishes evil for a people, He places their affairs with the foolish ones and their spoils with the stingy ones.[91]

Imam Aḥmad and others mention from Qatâdah:

> Moosâ narrated: My Lord! You are in the heavens, and we are on the earth, so how can we know Your anger from Your pleasure?
>
> He replied: When I appoint the best of you as your leader, this is a sign of My pleasure. When I appoint the worst of you as your leader, this is a sign of My anger.[92]

Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ mentions that according to al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyâḍ, the Lord revealed to one of His Prophets, “When those who know Me disobey Me, I unleash against them those who do not know Me.”[93]

He also mentions this marfoo‘ report narrated by Ibn ‘Umar:

«By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, the Hour will not be established until Allah sends dishonest leaders, wicked ministers, treacherous supporters, tyrannical officers, and sinful reciters. Their appearance is that of monks but their hearts are more putrid than a rotten carcass. Their whims differ, so Allah opens for them a dark, overwhelming tribulation that leaves them baffled. By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, Islam will be undone, one knot after another, until people will no longer say: Allah, Allah.

You will surely enjoin good and forbid evil, or Allah will send upon you the most evil of you who inflict you with the worst punishment. Then the best of you will supplicate but receive no response. You will surely enjoin good and forbid evil, or Allah will send upon you those who neither show mercy to your children nor respect your elders.» (Recorded by ash-Shajari; its chain contains a narrator who is considered *munkar*)

Sa‘eed ibn al-Jubayr narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«If people take an unfair, inflated measure (for themselves) or give less than the full measure (to others), Allah withholds rain from them. Once fornication becomes prevalent in a community, so does death. Once interest becomes prevalent, so does insanity. Once murder becomes prevalent, where people kill one another, Allah sends the enemy upon them. Once the act of the people of Looṭ becomes prevalent, there will be landslides (earthquakes). People will cease enjoining good and forbidding evil until their deeds are not raised (to Allah) and their supplications are not answered.» (Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarâni; authenticated by al-Mundhiri and al-Haythami)[94]

Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ also recorded this from Ibrâheem ibn al-Ash‘ath from ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Zayd from his father from Sa‘eed.

‘Urwah narrated from ‘Â’ishah:

«Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) entered my room out of breath. I recognized from his face that something had upset him. However, he did not say anything even after he had performed ablution and walked out. I came to the wall of my room (to listen).

He ascended the pulpit, thanked Allah, praised Him, and then said: O people! Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, orders you: Enjoin good and forbid evil before you call upon Me and I do not respond to you, and you seek My support and I do not support you, and you ask of Me and I do not give you.»

(Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Haythami; an abridged version was also recorded by al-Bazzâr, Ibn Ḥibbân, and Ibn Mâjah; according to al-Haythami, its chain contains an unknown narrator)

Al-‘Umari az-Zâhid states:

Your heedlessness about yourself and your negligence of Allah both result in you seeing what angers Allah and yet you still overlook it. You neither command regarding it, nor forbid people from doing it out of fear of those who cannot benefit or harm themselves.

He also mentions:

Those who give up enjoining good and forbidding evil due to the fear of the creation are stripped of people’s compliance with them. Even if they were to order their son or one of their servants, they would belittle their authority.

Qays ibn Abi Ḥâzim reported:

«Abu Bakr said: My people! You recite this verse and apply it to situations it was not intended for:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ عَلَيۡكُمۡ أَنفُسَكُمۡۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا ٱهۡتَدَيۡتُمۡۚ ... ١٠٥ ﴾

(سورة المائدة: ١٠٥)

﴿O you who believe, take care of your own selves. If anyone else goes astray it will not harm you so long as you follow true guidance…﴾ *(al-Mâ’idah 5: 105)*

Verily, I heard Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) say: When people see oppressors and do not seize them by the hand (to stop them)…» (A sound hadith recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, Abu Dâwood, Ibn Mâjah, and aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi; authenticated by an-Nawawi)

In another version, it is mentioned:

«When they see evil and do not change it, soon Allah Himself will send down punishment upon all of them.»

Al-Awzâ‘i reported from Yaḥyâ ibn Abi Katheer, from Abu Usâmah, that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«When the sin is hidden, it only harms its doer. When the sin becomes apparent and is not stopped, it harms everyone.» (Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarâni; according to al-Haythami, its chain contains a matrook narrator)

Imam Aḥmad mentions:

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb warned the people: Soon the town will crumble yet remain built!

Someone asked: How can it crumble yet remain built?

He replied: That will happen when its wicked [people] outnumber its pious and the clan is led by its hypocrites.

Al-Awzâ‘i mentioned that al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Aṭiyah narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The worst of my Ummah will dominate its best until the believers hide amongst them just as the hypocrites hide amongst us today.» (A mursal hadith recorded by al-Awzâ‘i and Ibn ‘Adiy)

Ibn ‘Abbâs reported:

«Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: A time will come when believers’ hearts dissolve just as salt dissolves in water.

Someone asked: From what, O Messenger of Allah?

He replied: From the evil they see that they cannot change.» (A marfoo‘ hadith recorded by Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ)[95]

Jareer narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Allah punishes a community when it commits sins and the pious among them do not change things (for the better), even though they are stronger and greater in number than the sinners.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, Ibn Mâjah, Ibn Ḥibbân, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and al-Bayhaqi with a reliable chain of narration)

Usâmah ibn Zayd narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«A person will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown into the fire of hell, causing his intestines to spill out. The person will run in circles in the fire as a donkey circles the mill. The people of hell will surround this person and ask: What happened to you? Did you not order us to do good and forbid us from evil?

The person will reply: I used to order you to do good but not do good myself, and I forbade you from evil yet practised evil myself.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Mâlik ibn Deenâr relates:

Men and women used to visit one of the scholars of the Children of Israel at his home. He would exhort them and remind them of the days of Allah. One day, he saw one of his sons winking at the women. He warned him: Be careful, my son. Be careful, my son.

He fell from his bed and broke his leg. His wife miscarried and his sons were killed. Allah revealed to their Prophet:

Tell that scholar: I will never bring forth a truthful person from your loins. Your anger on My behalf allowed you to say no more than: Be careful, my son.[96]

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood reported:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Beware of belittling sins, for they gather upon an individual until they destroy him.

The Prophet (ﷺ) gave them an example: It is like the example of those who stopped for rest in a desert, and their meal was brought. Each person went off and brought a branch until they collected a pile, lit their fire, and then roasted what they threw upon it.» (Recorded by Aḥmad and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with a chain of two unknown narrators)[97]

Anas ibn Mâlik narrated:

«You are performing acts which are thinner than a hair in your eyes, yet during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), we used to count them as some of the destructive sins.» (Bukhari)

Ibn 'Umar narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«A woman was punished for a cat she imprisoned until it died; she entered the fire of hell as a result. She neither fed it nor gave it any drink, nor did she release it to find its own food.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Abu Nu'aym reports:

> Someone asked Ḥudhayfah: Did the Children of Israel abandon their religion in a single day?
>
> He replied: No. Whenever they were commanded with something, they abandoned it. When they were prohibited from something, they performed it. That happened until they shed their religion, just as people take off their shirts.[98]

One of the salaf maintained that sins are the door to disbelief, just as a kiss is the door to intercourse, singing is the door to fornication, looking is the door to lusting, and illness is the door to death.[99]

Ibn 'Abbâs narrates:

> O sinner, do not feel secure about the awful consequences. Be sure that what follows the sin is greater than the sin you commit; your lack of shame before those [angels] on your right and left while committing

that sin is greater than the sin you committed; your laughing despite not knowing what Allah will do with you is greater than the sin; your joy with the sin when you were able to perform it is greater than the sin; your sadness about missing out on the sin is greater than the sin had you committed it; your fear of the wind blowing your door's curtain while you were committing that sin, and your heart not shuddering from Allah's Gaze at you, is greater than the sin.[100]

Al-Waleed reports that he heard from al-Awzâ'i that Bilâl ibn Sa'd mentioned, "Do not look at the smallness of the sin. Look at Him Whom you have disobeyed."[101]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyâḍ mentions:

To the extent that the sin is small in your eyes, it becomes great in the sight of Allah. To the extent that the sin is great in your eyes, it becomes small in the sight of Allah.

A narration mentions:

It was said that the Lord revealed to Moosâ: O Moosâ! The first to die from My creation was Iblees. That is because he disobeyed Me, and I only count those who disobey Me among the dead.

Abu Ṣâliḥ reported that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«When a believer sins, a black dot stains the heart. The heart is polished clean if the person desists, repents, and seeks forgiveness. If he continues, the dot increases until it overwhelms the heart, and that is the seal that Allah (□) mentions:

﴿كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾ (سورة المطفّفين: ١٤)

﴿Nay; rather their hearts have been covered with the stain of their misdeeds.﴾ *(al-Muṭaffifeen 83: 14)*» (Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn

Mâjah, al-Ḥâkim, an-Nasâ’i, and Ibn Ḥibbân with an authentic chain of narration)

At-Tirmidhi states, “This hadith is authentic.” Ḥudhayfah mentions, “When a person commits sin, a black dot stains the heart until the heart becomes like a black sheep with reddish spots.”

Ya‘qoob told us that his father heard from Ṣâliḥ, from Ibn Shihâb, from ‘Ubaydullâh ibn ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Utbah that ‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood narrated:

«Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: O people of Quraysh, you will retain your control in this (region) as long as you do not disobey Allah. If you disobey Him, He will send upon you those who will peel you, just as this branch is peeled.

He was referring to a branch in his hand. He peeled the bark off the branch until it was bare and white.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Ya‘lâ, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with a chain of sound and trustworthy narrators)

Wahb narrates:

> The Lord mentioned in one of His statements to the Children of Israel: When I am obeyed, I am pleased. When I am pleased, I bless and My blessings are endless. When I am disobeyed, I am angered. When I am angered, I curse and My curse reaches the seventh descendent [or progeny].[102]

Wakee‘ reports:

> Zakariyâ ibn ‘Âmir told us that ‘Â’ishah wrote to Mu‘âwiyah: When people disobey Allah, those who used to praise them become their critics.[103]

Abu Nu‘aym reports from Sâlim ibn Abul-Ja‘d:

Abu ad-Dardâ' warned us: Let a person beware of being cursed by the hearts of the believers without realizing it. Do you know when this happens?

I replied: No.

He explained: If someone sins in secret, Allah casts hatred for this person into the hearts of the believers without the person realizing it.[104]

'Abdullâh ibn Aḥmad reports from his father:

Muhammad ibn Seereen became depressed when his debts overwhelmed him. He explained: I know for certain that this depression is because of a sin I committed forty years ago.[105]

There is a subtle point about sin which people fail to understand. They do not see its effect immediately, and it may sometimes be deferred and forgotten. A person thinks that there will be no consequences and that the matter is as a poet states:

*If a wall is not changed by its collapse when it fell,*
*Never will dust emanate after it has collapsed.*

*Subḥân Allâh*! How many of the creation have been destroyed by this affliction? How many favours has it removed? How many catastrophes has it incurred?

How many scholars and virtuous people were deluded by it and became ignorant? They did not realize that sin destroys even if it does after some time, just like poison or a wound improperly bandaged.

Abu ad-Dardâ' mentions:

Worship Allah as though you see Him. Count yourself among the dead. Remember that a little that suffices you is better than much that

distracts you, and know that righteousness does not wear out and sin is not forgotten.[106]

A devout worshipper once gazed at a handsome young man. He was approached in his dream and told, “You will find its outcome forty years later.”

Sins also have an immediate effect. Sulaymân at-Taymi mentions, “A person commits a sin in private and later awakens feeling the humiliation.”

Yaḥyâ ibn Mu‘âdh ar-Râzi stated: I am astounded that sensible people could say in a supplication: O Allah! Do not let our enemies become satisfied with us… yet they satisfy every enemy of theirs!

Someone asked him: How can that be?

He replied: They disobey Allah, and at the time of resurrection, every enemy will be satisfied with [what happens to] them.

Dhun-Noon mentions, “Allah exploits in public those who betray Him in private.”

Sins have so many horrible effects and dangers for the heart and body in this world and the hereafter that only Allah knows (their full extent). The following are some of them.

## -1-

Sinners are deprived of knowledge. Knowledge is the light of Allah which He casts into the heart, and sins put out that light.

When Imam ash-Shâfi‘i sat and read to Imam Mâlik, he (the latter) was impressed with his sharp mind, intelligence, and deep understanding. He remarked, “I see that Allah has cast light into your heart, so do not put it out with the darkness of sin.”

Ash-Shâfi‘i himself relates:

*I complained to Wakee’ of my poor memory,*
*Leaving sins is what he guided me to address.*
*He informed me that knowledge is light,*
*And Allah’s light is not gifted to those who transgress.*[107]

## -2-

Sinners are deprived of sustenance. Thawbân narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ):

«A person is definitely deprived of sustenance because of a sin he has committed.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Mâjah, al-Baghawi, and al-Ḥâkim; some narrators in its chain are unknown)

We have previously discussed this. Likewise, *taqwâ* (fearful awareness of Allah) leads to sustenance and abandoning taqwâ leads to poverty. Sustenance is not provided through any means better than abandoning sin.

## -3-

The loneliness that sinners find in their hearts is the feeling of estrangement between them and Allah. No pleasure substitutes or even compares with this. If every delight in this world is collected, it will not counteract this loneliness. However, this matter can only be detected by someone whose heart is alive. Injury causes no pain to a dead person.

If sins were not avoided for anything but the fear of this loneliness, every sensible person would be careful to avoid them.

A man once complained to a devout worshipper about the estrangement that he found within himself. The worshipper told him:

*If sins have invited estrangement to your chest,*
*Divorce them, if you wish, and then find rest.*

Nothing is more painful than this loneliness of sin upon sin, and Allah is the source of strength.

## -4-

Alienation occurs between sinners and righteous people. The sinners feel an estrangement between themselves and the righteous. The stronger this estrangement becomes, the further they keep themselves away from their gatherings. Consequently, they become deprived of the blessing of benefiting from them. They draw nearer to the circle of Satan in proportion to their distance from the circle of the Most Gracious. This estrangement worsens until it becomes firmly established. Sinners even feel estranged in the company of their spouses, children, and relatives. They even feel awkward with themselves, and hence you find them estranged while alone.

One of the salaf mentioned that if he disobeyed Allah, he would see the consequences of that in the behaviour of his riding animal and his wife.[108]

## -5-

The affairs of sinners become complicated to the extent that everything they seek or attempt is either unavailable or difficult. Just as Allah (□) makes things easy for those who fear and revere Him, He makes things difficult for those who do not fear and revere Him.

By Allah, how amazing! How can people find the doors of goodness and well-being blocked and difficult without knowing what caused it?

## -6-

Sinners find actual darkness in their hearts – one that they feel just as they feel the darkness of the pitch-black night when it falls. The darkness of sin upon their hearts is like the perceptible darkness upon their eyes. Obedience is light, and sin is darkness. The stronger this darkness becomes, the more their confusion increases until they fall into innovations, deviations, and destructive practices without realizing it. That is just like a blind person who has walked out alone in the darkness of night. This darkness (of sin) strengthens until it appears in the eyes. It keeps getting stronger until it surfaces on the face and is seen by everyone.

Ibn ‘Abbâs states:

> A good deed causes brightness on the face, light in the heart, an increase in sustenance, strength in the body, and love in the hearts of the creation. An evil deed causes darkness on the face, gloom in the heart, weakness in the body, decreased sustenance, and hatred in the hearts of the creation.[109]

## -7-

Sins weaken the heart and body. The heart continues to weaken until the sins remove its life altogether.

The bodies of the believers strengthen because their strength sprouts from their hearts. When the heart strengthens, the body strengthens. The

wicked are the weakest in situations that demand strength; even if their body has strength, their strength betrays them when needed.

Reflect on the strength of Rome and Persia! How it betrayed them when they needed it the most, and how the people of faith conquered them with the strength of their bodies and hearts.[110]

## -8-

Sinners are deprived of good deeds. It is enough punishment that a sin prevents a good deed from occurring in its place and blocks the path to another good deed which in turn deters a third and then a fourth, and so on. Ultimately, this sin deters sinners from many acts of goodness, each better than this world and everything in it. This is like a person who ate a meal which resulted in a long illness rather than in minor illnesses that were less serious. Allah is the source of strength.

## -9-

Sins inevitably shorten lifespan and deplete its blessings. Just as righteousness increases lifespan, wickedness shortens it. In this matter, though, there is a difference of opinion. One group holds that the sinner's lifespan decreases because the blessing of the lifespan dissipates and dwindles. This is true, and it is one of the effects of disobedience.

Another group maintains that lifespan decreases just as sustenance decreases. According to them, Allah (□) has determined many means by which sustenance is increased and augmented. Likewise, there are many means by which lifespan is increased and augmented.

They maintain that nothing is wrong with the idea of lifespan increasing through various means and also decreasing through various means. They explain that sustenance and lifespan, prosperity and doom, health and sickness, poverty and affluence are all predestined by the Lord. Still, He has also predestined what He wishes will occur due to the causes associated with them.

A third group claims that a sin's role in diminishing lifespan is because the actual life is the life of the heart. For this reason, Allah (ﷻ) considers the disbeliever dead and not living:

﴿ أَمۡوَٰتٌ غَيۡرُ أَحۡيَآءٖۖ ... ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٢١)

﴿They are dead, lifeless…﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 21)*

They explain that true life is the life of the heart, and an individual's true lifespan is how long the person's life was spent in obedience to Allah. These are the actual hours of the person's life. Righteousness and piety increase during this lifespan, which is a person's true life; one has no 'life' apart from this.

In short, when people are heedless of Allah and become preoccupied with sins, they miss out on the days of their true life. They will reap the harvest of their squandering on the day they moan:

﴿ ... يَٰلَيۡتَنِي قَدَّمۡتُ لِحَيَاتِي ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفجر: ٢٤)

﴿…Would that I had sent forth good deeds for my life [in the hereafter]!﴾ *(al-Fajr 89: 24)*

Either people are interested in what benefits them in this world and the hereafter, or they are not. If they are not interested in this, they have wasted their entire life by acting in vain. If they are interested, these impediments have lengthened their journey. They have made the pathways of goodness difficult for themselves as they were preoccupied with their sins. This certainly amounts to an effective decrease in a person's lifespan.

The secret behind this matter is to know that a human's lifespan is the duration of the person's actual living. Also, someone is only 'living' when turning to the Lord, enjoying loving and remembering Him, and preferring His pleasure (above all).

## -10-

A sin plants another sin, and they trigger one another until it becomes difficult for the person to divorce them or escape their grip. One of the salaf stated, "Part of the punishment for an evil deed is an evil deed after it, and part of the reward for a good deed is a good deed after it."

When a person performs a good deed, another deed near it says, "Perform me as well." When a person performs it, a third says the same, and so on. The profit is multiplied, and the good deeds increase. The same happens with sins. This process continues until good acts or sins become established, deeply rooted traits and permanent qualities in people.

If the doers of good stop performing acts of worship, the chest feels constricted, the earth feels unwelcoming, and they feel like a fish out of the water until they return to these (good) acts. Only then do their hearts settle, and they finally feel comforted.

Similarly, if criminals stop performing evil deeds and turn to acts of worship, their hearts feel constricted, their chests become tight, and they feel cornered until they return to these sinful acts. Many flagrant sinners indulge in sin, experiencing neither enjoyment from it nor the temptation to commit it. Still, they indulge in it solely because of the pain they suffer when keeping away from it.

Al-Ḥasan ibn Hâni', the chief of these (types of) people, declares this openly:

*A glass [of wine] that I drink with pleasure,*
*And another by which I treat the former.*[111]

Another poet states:

*In essence, my cure is in this very disease of mine,*
*Like the one who treats drinking wine with wine.*

Some people continue to struggle with obedience. They incline themselves to it, look at it and prefer it until Allah (□), through His mercy, sends angels. These angels urge them to rush off their beds and seats and march towards it.

Others continue feeling inclined towards sins. They love and prefer them until Allah sends devils upon them who fervently incite these people towards them.

The first group supplies the troops of righteousness with aid, so they become their greatest supporters. In contrast, the other group supplies the troops of sin with aid, so they become supporters against them.

## -11-

One of the scariest effects of sins for the person is that they weaken the heart and its will. The will to sin strengthens, and the will to repent gradually weakens until the will to repent is stripped from the heart altogether. If half of it were to die, the person would not repent to Allah but present many counterfeit requests for forgiveness with the tongue while the heart is chained to sin. The person would remain insistent and determined to commit sins whenever possible. This is one of the greatest diseases and one of the nearest to destruction.

## -12-

Another effect of sin is the heart being stripped of its aversion to sin. Sin becomes habitual, and sinners do not feel embarrassed by others seeing or talking about them. To the masters of sin, this is the epitome of immorality and the ceiling of enjoyment. That is to the extent that one of them will boast about the sin and inform others who do not know it. These types of people are not pardoned. The path to their repentance is blocked, and its doors are usually closed for them, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«All the people of my Ummah would be pardoned for their sins except those who publicize them. And (it means) that a servant does a deed during the night and tells the people in the morning that he has done so and so, whereas Allah had concealed it. And he does a deed during the day, and at night, he tells the people, whereas Allah had concealed it.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

## -13-

Every sin is inherited from one of the nations destroyed by Allah (□). For instance:

1. Homosexuality is inherited from the people of Looṭ.
2. Usurping others' rights and giving them less than their due is inherited from the people of Shu'ayb.
3. Tyranny on earth and corruption are inherited from the people of Fir'awn.
4. Arrogance and dictatorship are inherited from the people of Hood.

The sinner wears the garments of one of these nations, who were Allah's enemies. 'Abdullâh ibn Aḥmad narrates from his father:

Mâlik ibn Deenâr reported that Allah revealed to one of the Prophets of the Children of Israel to tell his people: Do not enter the homes of My enemies, or wear their garments, or ride their mounts, or eat their food. Else, you will become My enemy just as they are My enemies.[112]

Ibn ‘Umar reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«I was sent with the sword between the hands of the Hour so that Allah may be worshipped alone, without any partners. My sustenance was made (to be) under the shade of my spear. Debasement and humiliation were cast upon those who opposed my command, and those who imitate a people become like them.» (A reliable hadith recorded by Aḥmad)

## -14-

Sins degrade people before their Lord, leading to people losing Allah’s favours. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri mentions, “They were insignificant before Allah, so they disobeyed Him. Had they been important to Allah, He would have protected them.”

When people are degraded in the sight of Allah, no one can honour them:

﴿ ... وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكۡرِمٍۚ ... ١٨ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٨)

﴿…Whomever Allah disgraces, none can honour him…﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 18)*

Even if people respect them outwardly because of their need for them or their fear of being harmed, they remain the most insignificant creatures in their hearts.

## -15-

People continue committing sins until they belittle them, and sins become insignificant in their hearts. This is the sign of doom. The smaller the sin in a person's eyes, the greater it becomes in the sight of Allah.

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood (□) narrated:

> Believers see their sins as if they are at the bottom of a mountain, fearing it will fall upon them. The wicked see their sins as if they were a fly that landed on the nose, so they flick it off with their hand, and it flies away. (Recorded by Bukhari)

## -16-

One of the consequences of sin is that it adversely affects other people and animals. Both the sinner and others suffer from the misfortune of sin and injustice. Abu Hurayrah mentioned, "The bird dies in its nest from the injustice of an oppressor."

Mujâhid states:

> When the drought becomes severe and rain is withheld, the earth's animals curse the descendants of Adam who sin. They declare that this misfortune is due to the sins of the descendants of Adam.

'Ikrimah mentions:

> The earth's animals, insects, and even the beetles and scorpions lament: We were deprived of rain because of the sins of the descendants of Adam.

It is not enough for people to just be punished for their sins. The adverse effects continue until they have earned the curse of those who have

committed no sins.

## -17-

Another effect of sin is that it inevitably incurs disgrace, for honour – all honour – lies in one's obedience to Allah:

﴿ مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا ... ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ١٠)

﴿Whoever seeks honour, then all honour belongs to Allah...﴾ *(Fâṭir 35: 10)*[113]

This means a person should seek honour by obeying Allah, for it can only be found by obeying Him.

One of the salaf used to say amidst his supplications, "O Allah. Honour me by enabling me to obey You and do not disgrace me by making me disobey You."

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri mentions:

> Even if the mules cry out below them and the stallions race forward with them, the disgrace of sin does not depart from their faces. Allah refuses those who disobey Him everything except disgrace.

'Abdullâh ibn al-Mubârak recited:

*I have seen sins put hearts to death,*
*Attachment to them certainly incurs disgrace.*
*Abandoning sins grants life to the hearts;*
*It is better for you afterwards not to chase.*
*What corrupted the religion but the kings,*
*Wicked scholars and monks without grace?*

## -18-

Another adverse effect is that sins ruin the mind. The mind is a light, and sins extinguish that light. When its light is extinguished, it becomes weak and deficient. One of the salaf said, "No one ever disobeyed Allah unless they had lost their mind."

This is obvious, for if they had a mind, it would have restrained these people from sinning. They are within the grasp of their Lord and in His power. He is watching them and is in His kingdom and upon His earth. His angels also watch them, and the Qur'an exhorts them against disobedience. Their faith and conscience forbid them, the reality of death forbids them, and the threat of hellfire forbids them. All the good things that sins deprive those people of, in this world and the hereafter, are many times more pleasurable than what they will attain through sinning. In view of all this, will anyone in their right mind still insist on belittling sins and regarding them as trivial?

## -19-

Another undesirable effect is that when sins accumulate, the sinners' hearts become sealed and they become heedless, as the salaf stated regarding the following verse:

﴿كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾ (سورة المطفِّفين: ١٤)

﴿Nay; rather their hearts have been covered with the stain of their misdeeds.﴾ *(al-Muṭaffifeen 83: 14)*

One of the salaf remarked, "Sin after sin."

Al-Ḥasan states, "It is a sin after sin until the heart becomes blind."[114]

Another said that when their sins and disobedience became too much, it overwhelmed their hearts.

The reason behind this is that sins cause the heart to rust. If sins increase, the rust overwhelms the heart until it becomes a stain. It then smothers (the heart) further until it becomes a locked seal, and at this point, the heart is firmly encased. If this still occurs after guidance and insight, it completely overcomes the sinners and their enemies are empowered to direct them wherever they wish.

## -20-

Another effect is that sins incur the curse of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), for he cursed (individuals) for certain sins,[115] while other sins are greater than these. Their doers are inevitably included in the curse.

1. The Prophet (ﷺ) cursed the tattooist and those who have tattoos; the extender (of hair) and those who wear hair extensions; the one who plucks eyebrows and those who have them plucked; and the filer of teeth and those who have them filed.
2. He cursed the consumer of ribâ (interest), its payer, the writer (of its contract), and its two witnesses.
3. He cursed the muḥallil, and the one for whom the muḥallil provides his services.[116]
4. He cursed the thief.
5. He cursed the drinker of wine, its server, the squeezer (of its grapes), those for whom it was squeezed, its seller, its buyer, those who profit from it, those who transport it, and those to whom it is transported.
6. He cursed those who change the road marks of the earth, meaning its landmarks and boundaries.

7. He cursed those who curse their parents.
8. He cursed those who use something with a soul as a target at which they shoot arrows.
9. He cursed men who imitate women and women who imitate men.
10. He cursed those who slaughter (animals) for someone other than Allah.
11. He cursed those who innovate and those who grant asylum to innovators.
12. He cursed those who make images.
13. He cursed those who perform the acts of the people of Looṭ.
14. He cursed those who insult their father or their mother.
15. He cursed those who mislead a blind person on the road.
16. He cursed those who have sexual relations with an animal.
17. He cursed those who brand a beast on its face.
18. He cursed those who harm Muslims or plot against them.
19. He cursed those (women) who frequently visit graves and those who erect mosques and light lanterns upon them.[117]
20. He cursed those who incite a woman against her husband or a slave against their master.
21. He cursed those who have anal intercourse with a woman.
22. He informed us that the angels curse a woman who spends the night having forsaken her husband's bed.
23. He cursed those who ascribe themselves to someone other than their own father.

24. He informed us that the angels curse those who point a metal (weapon) at another Muslim.

25. He cursed those who insult his Companions (□).

## -21-

In the Qur'an, Allah Himself has cursed those who spread corruption on earth, sever ties of kinship, disrespect Him, and disrespect His Messenger (ﷺ).

1. Allah (□) has cursed those who conceal the clear proofs and guidance that He has sent down.

2. He has cursed those who falsely accuse chaste, innocent, believing women of fornication, who are oblivious (to indecency).

3. He has cursed those who consider the path of the disbeliever more correct than the path of the believing Muslim.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) also cursed the man who dresses in women's clothing and the woman who dresses in men's clothing. He cursed the payer of bribes, the one who accepts it, and the intermediary in the bribes. He also cursed for things other than these.[118]

If sins necessitate nothing but a curse by Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ), and the angels, this should be a sufficient reason to abandon them.

## -22-

Another effect of sins is being deprived of the supplication of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and the angels. Allah (□) commanded His Prophet (ﷺ) to seek forgiveness for the believing men and women. He mentions:

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ يَحۡمِلُونَ ٱلۡعَرۡشَ وَمَنۡ حَوۡلَهُۥ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمۡدِ رَبِّهِمۡ وَيُؤۡمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَسۡتَغۡفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ رَبَّنَا وَسِعۡتَ كُلَّ شَيۡءٖ رَّحۡمَةٗ وَعِلۡمٗا فَٱغۡفِرۡ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُواْ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمۡ عَذَابَ ٱلۡجَحِيمِ ٧ رَبَّنَا وَأَدۡخِلۡهُمۡ جَنَّٰتِ عَدۡنٍ ٱلَّتِي وَعَدتَّهُمۡ وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنۡ ءَابَآئِهِمۡ وَأَزۡوَٰجِهِمۡ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمۡۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٨ وَقِهِمُ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِۚ وَمَن تَقِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ يَوۡمَئِذٖ فَقَدۡ رَحِمۡتَهُۥۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ٩﴾ (سورة غافر: ٧-٩)

﴿Those [angels] who bear the Throne and those who are around it glorify and praise their Lord; they believe in Him and pray for forgiveness for those who believe [saying]: Our Lord, You encompass all things in Your mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who repent and follow Your path, and protect them from the punishment of the blazing fire. Our Lord, and admit them to gardens of perpetual abode which You have promised them, and [admit] the righteous among their forebears, their spouses and their offspring. Verily, You are the Almighty, the Most Wise. And protect them from the evil consequences [of their sins], for whomever You protect from evil consequences on that Day, You will indeed have bestowed mercy upon him, and that is the supreme triumph.﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 7-9)*

This is the supplication of the angels for those penitent believers who follow the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) as their only path. None but these (penitent believers) should hope for the harvest of this supplication since they match the description of those supplicated for. Allah is the source of strength.

One of the punishments for sins is described in the hadith narrated by Samurah ibn Jundub:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) would often ask his Companions: Have any of you had a dream (tonight)?

Whoever wished to relay the dream to him would do so.

One morning, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to us: Two men came to me (in a dream) last night and told me: Come with us.

I went with them until we came upon a man lying down and another standing above him with a boulder. Suddenly, he dropped the boulder upon the first man's head, which cracked his head and caused the boulder to roll far away. The second man went after the boulder and retrieved it but did not return to the first man until his head was restored to its initial state. He continued repeating what he had done to the first man.

I asked them: *Subḥân Allâh*! What is this?

They ordered me: Move on. Move on.

We proceeded until we came upon a man lying face down and a second man standing over him with an iron hook. Suddenly, he went to one of the first man's cheeks and tore it till the nape of his neck, and tore his nose till the nape of his neck, and tore his eye till the nape of his neck. Then he went over to the other side of his face and did the same to that. He would not finish one side before finding the other side repaired to its initial state, so he would return to it, repeating what he had done the first time.

I asked them: *Subḥân Allâh*! Who are these two?

They told me: Move on. Move on.

We proceeded until we came upon something similar to an oven … (I believe he said) … and we heard clattering noises and voices from within. We looked into it and found naked men and women. The flames would rise

to them from below, and when these flames reached them, they would scream hysterically.

I asked them: Who are these?

They ordered me: Move on. Move on.

We proceeded until we came to a river of blood where a man was swimming, and on the river bank was a man who had collected many stones. The man would continue swimming and proceed to the man who had collected the stones (trying to exit the river). The swimmer would open his mouth, and the man on the bank would hurl a stone into his mouth. He would go off swimming once more and then return to the bank again. Whenever he returned, he would open his mouth, and the man on the bank would hurl a stone into it.

I asked them: Who are these two?

They told me again: Move on. Move on.

We proceeded until we came upon a man with an awful appearance – the worst appearance you have ever seen. He had a fire, which he was kindling and fervently circling.

I asked them: Who is this?

They told me: Move on. Move on.

We proceeded until we came upon a lush garden that contained all the colours of spring. In the garden was an extremely tall man; I could hardly see his head because it was so high in the sky. Around this man were more children than I have ever seen.

I asked them: What is this?

They still told me: Move on. Move on.

We proceeded until we finally came upon an enormous garden. I have never seen a garden greater or more beautiful.

They told me: Ascend.

We ascended through it until we reached a city built with alternate bricks of gold and silver. We approached the door of the city and sought permission to enter. It was opened for us, and we entered, and there we were met by some people. One-half of their faces were the most beautiful you have ever seen, and the other half was the ugliest you have ever seen.

The two (angels) ordered them: Go and dive into this river.

The flowing river before us was pure white.[119] After diving into it, they returned to us, ridden of that ugliness (that covered half of their faces).

They told me: This is the Garden of Eden, and your residence is over there.

My gaze turned upward to find a palace that resembled a white cloud.

They repeated: That is your residence.

I said to them: May Allah bless you both. Let me enter it!

They replied: No, not right now, but you will enter it.

I remarked: I have seen some incredible things this night, so what have I seen?

They replied: Now we will tell you.

The first man whose head was being smashed with a boulder is the one who receives the Qur'an, then rejects it, and sleeps through the prescribed prayers.

The man whose cheeks, nose, and eyes were torn to the nape of his neck is one who leaves a house telling a lie that reaches the (farthest) horizon.

The naked men and women in something like an oven are those who fornicated.

The man swimming in the river and being fed stones is the consumer of interest.

The awful-looking man beside the fire, which he kindled and fervently circled, is Mâlik, the gatekeeper of the hellfire.

The tall man in the garden is Prophet Ibrâheem.

The children around him are those who died upon the *fiṭrah*. (In the narration of al-Barqâni: …who were born upon the fiṭrah.)

One of the Muslims asked: O Messenger of Allah! What about the children of the polytheists?

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) added: Including the children of the polytheists.

The people who were half beautiful and half ugly are those who mixed righteous deeds with evil deeds, and Allah excused them.» (Bukhari)

## -24-

Sin and disobedience cause various types of corruption in the earth's water, air, plants, vegetation, and housing:

﴿ ظَهَرَ ٱلۡفَسَادُ فِي ٱلۡبَرِّ وَٱلۡبَحۡرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتۡ أَيۡدِي ٱلنَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعۡضَ ٱلَّذِي عَمِلُواْ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡجِعُونَ ٤١ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤١)

﴿Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea because of what people's hands have earned. Thus Allah causes them to taste the consequences of some of what they have done, so that they may turn in repentance.﴾ *(ar-Room 30: 41)*

Mujâhid said: When oppressors take power, they strive to oppress and cause corruption. As a result, Allah withholds the rain, which in turn destroys the crops and animals, and 'Allah does not like corruption.'

He recited: ﴿Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea because of what people's hands have earned. Thus Allah causes them to taste the consequences of some of what they have done, so that they may turn in repentance.﴾ *(30: 41)*

He explained: By Allah, it is not [just] this sea of yours. Every town near the water is by a ﴿sea﴾.

'Ikrimah states:

﴿Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea﴾ does not just refer to this sea of yours; it means every town near water.

Qatâdah mentions, "The people of the land are the Bedouins. The people of the ﴿sea﴾ are those who live in the towns and by the rivers."[120]

I say that Allah (□) also refers to fresh water as ﴿sea﴾:

﴿وَمَا يَسْتَوِي ٱلْبَحْرَانِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ سَآئِغٌ شَرَابُهُۥ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ ... ﴿١٢﴾﴾

(سورة فاطر: ١٢)

﴿The two bodies of flowing water are not alike; one is fresh and palatable, pleasant to drink, and the other is salty and bitter…﴾ *(Fâṭir 35: 12)*

On land, ﴿fresh﴾ water means flowing rivers that are not still; the salty sea is the only still body of water. The verse refers to towns near flowing water (such as a river or a lake).

Ibn Zayd indicated that ﴿Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea﴾ refers to sins.

I say that he means that sins cause the corruption that has appeared. If he meant that sins appeared, then the letter lâm indicates consequence (and not causation): ﴿**Thus** Allah causes them to taste the consequences of some of what they have done﴾ *(30: 41).*

The first interpretation of corruption is the shortages, evil, and pain that Allah brings about on earth when people are sinful. Whenever they initiate a sin, Allah initiates a punishment for them. One of the salaf said, "Every time you introduce a sin, Allah introduces another punishment through His great power."

The apparent meaning – and Allah knows best – is that 'corruption' here means sins and their consequences. This is supported by ﴿Thus Allah causes them to taste the consequences of some of what they have done﴾. This is our condition; He has only made us taste a small fraction of the consequences of our evil deeds. Were He to make us encounter all the consequences, He would not leave a single creature remaining on the earth.

## -25-

Another effect of sin on the earth is the occurrence of landslides and quakes and the depletion of its blessings. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) passed by the dwellings of Thamood and prevented his Companions from entering their homes unless they were weeping. He prevented them from drinking their water and drawing water from their wells. He even commanded them to feed their camels the dough they had kneaded with their own water. This was due to the ill effects of sin upon the water of Thamood. Sin has similar awful effects on vegetation that cause it to diminish in size and be affected by blights.

Imam Aḥmad mentions in relation to a hadith:

In the stores of the Umayyad Caliphate, wheat was found with grains the size of a date pit. It was in a pouch that was inscribed: This used to grow in the age of justice.[121]

Allah (□) initiated many epidemics because of the sins people committed.

A group of elders from the desert informed me that vegetation in the past was larger than it is today. Also, many blights that have befallen it were unfamiliar to them, for they are a recent occurrence.

## -26-

Sin has adverse effects on the physical structure of the creation. Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah created Adam with a height of sixty cubits in the sky, yet the creation continues to decrease (in height) until now.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

When Allah wishes to purify the earth from the oppressors, the wicked, and the traitors, He will send forth one of His slaves[122] from the household of His Prophet (ﷺ). He will fill the earth with justice, just as it was filled with tyranny. The Messiah will kill the oppressors and establish the religion with which Allah sent His Messenger (ﷺ). The earth will release its blessings and return to its former condition until a group of people eat a pomegranate and shade themselves with its peel. A bunch of grapes will be a full camel load, and a newborn camel will easily suffice a large gathering of people.[123]

When the earth is cleansed of sin, Allah's blessings will manifest (after sins and disbelief had previously buried them).

Undoubtedly, the punishments Allah sent down to the earth are still occurring. They seek out the sins that fit them – the same crimes that the

prior nations were punished for.

These effects on the earth are lingering just as these sins were inherited from the previous crimes. Allah's wisdom and His decree in the universe synchronize most appropriately; the greatest punishments are for the greatest crimes and the lighter ones for the lighter crimes. Allah (ﷻ) deals with His creatures in the grave and the abode of recompense in the same manner.

Reflect on someone being accompanied by Satan, and how this affects the person's location and residence. When Satan accompanies and dominates a person, the blessings are stripped from their lifespan, actions, statements, and sustenance. Since obeying (Satan) results in these dire consequences on earth, the blessings are stripped from every location where Satan is obeyed. Similarly, when the person's residence is hellfire, it is appropriate that no comfort, mercy, or blessings exist there.

## -27-

One of the punishments for sin is that it extinguishes the fire of *gheerah* in the heart. This protective jealousy safeguards the livelihood and betterment of the heart, just as the natural heat of the body ensures the livelihood of the entire body. Protective jealousy is a flame that expels filth and disapproved qualities from within (the heart), just as a flame expels the impurities from gold, silver, and iron.

The noblest, most ambitious people are those with the most intense protective jealousy regarding themselves, their closest relatives, and people in general. For this reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) was the most protectively jealous regarding his Ummah, and Allah (ﷻ) is even more protectively jealous than him.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Does the jealousy of Sa‘d surprise you? I certainly am more jealous than him, and Allah is more jealous than me.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said in the sermon that he gave after the eclipse prayer:

«O Ummah of Muhammad! No one is more indignant (*aghyar*) and angrier than Allah when His male slave or female slave fornicates.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«No one has more protective jealousy than Allah, so He has forbidden indecency, both openly and in private. No one loves to excuse more than Allah, so He has sent the Messengers as bearers of glad tidings and as warners. No one loves to be praised more than Allah, so He praises Himself.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

In this hadith, he combined protective jealousy with hating indecency and loving to excuse, which entails completeness in justice, mercy, and kindness. It indicates that Allah (□), despite His intense protective jealousy, loves His slaves to apologize and accepts the repentance of those who apologize to Him. He does not punish His slaves for committing something that makes Him protectively jealous before granting them respite. This is why He dispatched His Messengers and sent down His Books so that He may excuse them (where they merit this) and warn them.

This is the epitome of glory and kindness and the pinnacle of perfection. Many with intense protective jealousy are driven by this emotion and swiftly carry out the punishment without respite. They do not accept any apology from those who apologize to them. A person may have a legitimate excuse, but the other person’s intense jealousy stands in the way of accepting the excuse.

On the other hand, many who do accept excuses are driven to accept them because they lack protective jealousy. They end up becoming overly

lenient with excuses and accept one that is not legitimate. Some even excuse themselves on the basis of *qadar* (divine predestination).[124] Neither of these types is praiseworthy.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«There is a type of protective jealousy that Allah likes and one that Allah hates. Allah hates jealousy where there is no suspicion…» (A good hadith recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, an-Nasâ'i, ad-Dârimi, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and Ibn Ḥibbân)

Protective jealousy only becomes praiseworthy when it is followed by accepting genuine excuses. One becomes indignant rather than maliciously jealous and accepts excuses where merited. Whoever behaves like this may justifiably be praised.

Since all of the most perfect attributes come together in Allah (□), He is more worthy of praise than anyone. No one can ever praise Him in a matter befitting of Him. He is as He has praised Himself.

Those who conform to Allah in one of His attributes are led to Him by its reins. They are brought close to Him and near to His mercy. It makes them beloved to Allah. This is because Allah (□) is merciful, and He loves those who are merciful; He is generous, and He loves those who are generous; and He is All-Knowing, and He loves the knowledgeable. Allah is strong and loves a strong believer more than the weak one. He is modest and loves people with modesty. He is beautiful, and He loves beautiful people.[125] He is *Witr* and loves people who offer the witr prayer.[126,127]

If sins and disobedience do nothing but lead to the opposite of these attractive qualities and prevent the doer from being described with them, this is sufficient punishment. A thought becomes a whisper, a whisper becomes a will, and the will strengthens and becomes determination. The determination then becomes an action, which becomes an innate quality and

a firmly rooted trait. At this point, it becomes difficult to escape it, just as it is difficult for a person to escape any other inherent trait.

To summarize, the more contact one has with sins, the more protective jealousy with regard to oneself, the family, and other people is extracted from the heart. It could weaken to such an extent that one is no longer appalled by any indecency committed by others or oneself. Once one reaches these limits, one has entered the gate of destruction.

Many such people are not only desensitized to the audacity of sin but also beautify indecency and injustice to others. They decorate it, invite to it, urge to it, and strive to help (others) attain it. For this reason, the *dayyooth* is the vilest of Allah's creation and paradise is forbidden to such a person.[128] Similar are those who legalize injustice and the oppression of others, and make it enticing to them!

Look at what they were driven to because of the lack of protective jealousy! This proves that the foundation of religion is gheerah and that one with no protective jealousy has no religion. Protective jealousy ignites the heart, which consequently ignites the limbs and wards off evil and indecency. Lack of protective jealousy deadens the heart, causing the limbs to die, which leaves no resistance whatsoever.

The likeness of protective jealousy in the heart is that of the body's strength (of immunity), which prevents disease and resists it. Once this strength departs, the disease finds an accommodating place and no resistance. It hence becomes established, and one's destruction ensues. It is also similar to the horns of a buffalo with which it defends itself and its young. If they break, the enemy becomes hopeful (of attacking it).

Another punishment for sin is the elimination of *ḥayâ'*. It is the lifeline of the heart and the basis of every good. Its elimination dictates the elimination of every good altogether.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Ḥayâ' is entirely good.» (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«People have retained from the words of the earlier Prophets (the statement): If you do not have ḥayâ', do what you wish.» (Bukhari)

This hadith has two interpretations. The first interpretation is that it is a threat. In other words, one with no modesty is not ashamed to behave indecently, for it is modesty that drives a person to abstain. Without the restraint of modesty, a person will surely indulge in evil. This is the interpretation of Abu 'Ubayd.[129]

The second interpretation is that if you feel no shame indulging in an immodest action in front of Allah, go ahead and do it. You are only required to abandon what makes you feel ashamed before Allah. This is the interpretation of Imam Aḥmad, according to the narration of Ibn Hâni.[130]

According to the first interpretation, it is a threat, similar to:

﴿ ... ٱعۡمَلُواْ مَا شِئۡتُمۡۖ ... ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة فُصِّلَت: ٤٠)

﴿…Do whatever you wish…﴾ *(Fuṣṣilat 41: 40)*

According to the second interpretation, it means permission and consent.

One may ask whether it can be understood both ways simultaneously.

I say this is not possible, not even according to those who interpret general terms as having multiple meanings, due to the conflict in the

meanings of threat and consent. Asserting one necessitates dismissing the other.

The point is that sins weaken a person's self-respect until it is peeled away altogether. This could happen to the extent that some people may no longer be affected by others' knowledge of their pitiful condition or the fact that others are watching them. Many such people even inform others about their affairs and the wickedness they persist in.

The driving factor behind this is their being stripped of their sense of shame. When individuals reach this state, no hope of their reform remains. Iblees (Satan) is pleased to see their faces and exclaims, "May you be ransomed, you who will not succeed."

The term ḥayâ' is derived from *ḥayâ*, which means to be alive, just like the word *ḥayâh*, which means life. Rain is also called *ḥayan*, because the life of the earth, plants, and animals is contingent upon it. Likewise, the life of this world and the next is called ḥayâh ('life'). One with no modesty is 'dead' in this world and miserable in the hereafter.

There is a direct correlation between sins, lack of modesty, and lack of protective jealousy. Each of them invites the other, ardently summoning it. If someone feels ashamed to disobey Allah (□), He would feel ashamed to punish them on the Day they meet Him. Conversely, if someone is not ashamed to disobey Him, Allah is not ashamed to punish them.

## -29-

One of the punishments for sins is that they weaken the exaltation of the Lord in the (sinner's) heart. They inevitably weaken the respect a person's heart has for Allah, whether this is intended or not.

If Allah's glory and greatness became established in someone's heart, that person would not dare to disobey Him. A person may be deluded and

maintain, “What drives me to sins is not my moral weakness, but rather my good expectations and hope in His mercy, due to His greatness in my heart!”

This is self-delusion. The greatness and majesty of Allah in a person’s heart implies exalting His sanctity because exalting His sanctity is an impediment between the person and sins.

Those with the nerve to defy Allah do not hold Him in high esteem. How can someone give Him proper esteem, exalt and glorify Him, affirm His greatness, and pay due respect to Him, and still be unconcerned about His commands and prohibitions? This is an absolute impossibility and clearly fallacious.

It is enough of a punishment that sins cause the exaltation of Allah to dwindle in one’s heart so that one neither exalts His sanctity nor is concerned with His rights.

One of the punishments for this is that Allah (□) removes the respect that the hearts of other creatures have for such individuals. Consequently, such people become unimportant to others and are belittled by them, just as they considered Allah’s commands unimportant and belittled them.

To the degree that a slave loves Allah, the people love him; to the degree that he fears Allah, the creatures fear him; and to the degree that he exalts Allah and His sanctities, the people exalt his sanctities.

How can people violate Allah’s sanctity and expect that their own sanctity will not be trampled? How can someone mock Allah’s rights and not be made into a mockery by Allah in the eyes of other people? How can someone belittle disobeying Allah and not be belittled by His creatures?

Allah (□) has alluded to this in His Book when mentioning the punishments for sins. He made them fall back (into error and disbelief) for what they earned.[131] He has covered and sealed their hearts for their sins.[132] He has forgotten them as they have forgotten Him.[133] He has humiliated

them as they have humiliated His religion.[134] He has neglected them as they have neglected His command.

This is also why He states in the verse mentioning the creatures prostrating to Him:

﴿ ... وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ ۚ ... ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٨)

﴿…Whomever Allah disgraces, none can honour him…﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 18)*

When they lost interest in prostrating to Him, belittled it, and did not do so, Allah humiliated them. There was no honour for them after He had humiliated them. Who can honour those whom Allah has humiliated? Who can humiliate those whom He has honoured?

## -30-

Another of its punishments is that sin makes Allah forget and abandon the sinner, leaving the person alone with Satan. This is the brink of destruction, after which no salvation can be hoped for:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحشر: ١٨-١٩)

﴿O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah, for verily Allah is well aware of all that you do. Do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He caused them to forget themselves. It is they who are the evildoers.﴾ *(al-Ḥashr 59: 18-19)*

Allah has commanded that He be feared. He has forbidden His believing slaves from resembling those He has forgotten because they did

not fear Him. He has informed them that the punishment for not fearing Him is that He makes them forget themselves. In other words, He has made them forget what benefits them, saves them from His punishment, and leads them to eternal life and its complete delight, felicity, and bliss. He has made them forget all that in repayment for forgetting His greatness, forgetting to fear Him, and forgetting to uphold His commands.

You find sinners neglectful and heedless of what is good for them. Allah has diverted their hearts from remembering Him, so they follow their desires and their affairs are exposed. They have become heedless of their worldly benefit and that of their hereafter. They have squandered their eternal happiness and exchanged it for the lowliest enjoyment, which, in fact, is nothing but a summer cloud or an illusory shadow:

*Like a sleeper's dream or like a passing shadow,*
*Whereas the wise, with these likes, are not tricked.*

The greatest of punishments is that people forget, neglect, and deprive themselves of their share of Allah. They are cheated into selling themselves for the lowest, most unworthy price. Such people have lost the One they cannot do without, the One Who can never be replaced. They have exchanged Him for what they can definitely do without and what can certainly be replaced:

*For everything you lose, there can be compensation,*
*Except for Allah; if you lose Him, there is no compensation.*

Allah (□) compensates for everything else, but nothing can compensate for Him. He suffices against anything, but nothing suffices against Him. He makes up for everything, but nothing makes up for Him. He satisfies us in everything, but nothing satisfies us without Him. How can people refuse to obey Him, the One and Only, even for the blink of an eye? How can they forget to remember Him and ignore His command until He makes them forget themselves? They do themselves the greatest injustice.

They have not wronged their Lord, and their Lord has not wronged them; they have only wronged themselves.

## -31-

Another punishment is that sin removes people from the circle of those with *iḥsân* and deprives them of the reward these people receive.[135] When iḥsân reaches the heart, it prevents the person from sinning. This is because those who 'worship Allah as though they see Him' are only like that due to the remembrance, love, fear, and hope of Allah overtaking their hearts. It is as if they are looking at Him, and this comes between them and wanting to sin; they never actually go on to commit the sin. When people leave the circle of iḥsân, they miss out on its companionship, elite fellowship, comforting lifestyle, and complete joy.

If Allah wishes well for them, He keeps them in the general circle of believers. If they actually start committing sins, they are removed from this circle. The Prophet (ﷺ) explained this:

«Fornicators are not considered believers while fornicating, nor are drinkers of wine while drinking, nor are thieves while stealing. Those who rob, knowing people are watching them, are not believers while they are robbing. Beware, beware. Yet repentance is still available.» (Bukhari and Muslim)[136]

## -32-

Those who miss out on the company of the believers and Allah's splendid defence of them have certainly missed out on every good that Allah, in His Book, has made contingent upon faith – for Allah defends those who believe.

There are about a hundred virtues contingent upon faith, each one better than this world and everything in it. Some of these are:

1. There will be a great reward:

﴿ ... وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٤٦)

﴿…And Allah will give the believers an immense reward.﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 146)*

2. They will be protected from the dangers of this world and the hereafter:

﴿ ۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدَٰفِعُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ ... ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٣٨)

﴿Verily, Allah will defend those who believe...﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 38)*

3. The angels and the carriers of (Allah's) Throne seek forgiveness for them:

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ ٱلْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ... ﴿٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٧)

﴿Those [angels] who bear the Throne and those who are around it glorify and praise their Lord; they believe in Him and pray for forgiveness for those who believe…﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 7)*

4. They will gain Allah's allegiance. Those with whom Allah allies are never subdued (by the people):

﴿ ٱللَّهُ وَلِىُّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ... ﴿٢٥٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٥٧)

﴿Allah is the Protector of those who have faith…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 257)*

5. Allah (□) commands His angels to keep them firm in faith:

﴿إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ... ﴿١٢﴾﴾ (سورة الأنفال: ١٢)

﴿[Remember] when your Lord inspired the angels [saying]: Verily, I am with you, so support those who believe…﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 12)*

6. For them is a lofty position with their Lord as well as forgiveness, noble provision:

﴿ ...لَّهُمْ دَرَجَٰتٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة الأنفال: ٤)

﴿…they will have high ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness and a generous provision.﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 4)*

7. They will gain honour:

﴿ ... وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾﴾ (سورة المنافقون: ٨)

﴿…In fact, might belongs to Allah, and to His Messenger and to the believers. But the hypocrites do not know.﴾ *(al-Munâfiqoon 63: 8)*

8. Allah is with those who have faith:

﴿ ... وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾ (سورة الأنفال: ١٩)

﴿…verily, Allah is with the believers.﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 19)*

9. They will be exalted in this world and the hereafter:

﴿ ...يَرْفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ دَرَجَٰتٍ ... ﴿١١﴾﴾ (سورة المجادلة: ١١)

﴿…Allah will raise in status those of you who believe and [especially] those who have been given knowledge…﴾ *(al-Mujâdilah 58: 11)*

10. He will grant them two portions of His mercy – a light by which they walk and forgiveness for their sins.[137]

11. They will gain the love Allah (□) has reserved for them. He will love them and make them beloved to His angels, Prophets, and righteous slaves.

12. They will be secure on the Day when fear intensifies:

﴿ ... فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ٤٨)

﴿...So those who believe and mend their ways will have no fear, nor will they grieve.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 48)*

13. They are the favoured ones, and we have been commanded to ask Him to guide us to their path seventeen times each day and night.[138]

14. The Qur'an is a guidance and cure for only them:

﴿ ... قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ هُدًى وَشِفَآءٌ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُنَادَوْنَ مِن مَّكَانٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

(سورة فُصِّلَت: ٤٤)

﴿…Say: It is, for those who believe, guidance and healing; and for those who do not believe, there is deafness in their ears and they are blind to what it contains [of beauty and signs]. It is as if they are being called from a far-off place.﴾ *(Fuṣṣilat 41: 44)*

The point is that faith results in every good. Every good in this world and the hereafter results from faith. Likewise, every evil in this world and

the hereafter results from a lack of it. How can individuals underestimate (the evils of) partaking in something that removes them from the circle of the faithful? It places a barricade between them and it (even though it does not remove them from the general circle of the Muslims). Yet their continuity and persistence in sinning risk their hearts becoming sealed, causing them to leave Islam altogether. From here, we understand the intense fear of the salaf. One of them said, "You people fear sins, but I [also] fear disbelief."

## -33-

Another punishment is that sins weaken the heart's journey to Allah and the abode of the hereafter, or they obstruct its quest or halt its journey altogether. They do not allow the sinners to take a single step towards Allah – that is, if it does not send them away from Him instead. Sin bars the passenger, hinders the traveller, and sends back the seeker, for the heart only travels to Allah in relation to its strength. When the heart is sickened by sins, the strength that drives it weakens. If it depletes entirely, the person is severed from Allah in a manner that is difficult to recover from – and Allah is the source of strength.

A sin deadens the heart, infects it, or weakens its strength. This is inevitable, and this weakness leads to the eight things that the Prophet (ﷺ) sought refuge from, which are:

«Worry and grief, inability and laziness, cowardice and stinginess, the burden of debt and subjugation by other people.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Each of these pairs has related elements:

1. **Worry and grief** are a pair. When a matter detested by the heart is expected in the future, it causes worry. When the matter has previously taken place, it causes grief.

2. **Inability and laziness** are a pair. If one does not participate in what brings goodness and success because one lacks the strength to do so, it is an inability. If it was because one did not want to, it is laziness.

3. **Cowardice and stinginess** are a pair. If a person's body serves no benefit (to others), it is cowardice.[139] If wealth is the culprit, it is stinginess.

4. **The burden of debt and subjugation by other people** are a pair. When a person has a rightful hold over another financially, this is the burden of debt. When it occurs through injustice or persecution, this is being subjected to other people's inequity.

The point is that sins are some of the strongest factors that incur these eight things, just as they are the strongest inciters of:

«…the exhaustion of calamity, the pits of doom, the evils of fate, and the satisfaction of one's enemies.» (Muslim)[140]

Additionally, they are some of the strongest factors that incur the removal of Allah's blessings, the suspension of His pardon, the suddenness of His anger, and His entire wrath.

## -34-

A punishment for sin is that it removes blessings and invites disaster. Blessings vanish and disasters occur because of sin. Calamities are only alleviated through repentance. As 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib (□) mentions, "No calamity has descended except due to a sin, and no calamity has been removed without repentance."

﴿ وَمَآ أَصَٰبَكُم مِّن مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتۡ أَيۡدِيكُمۡ وَيَعۡفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٖ ٣٠ ﴾

(سورة الشورى: ٣٠)

﴿Whatever calamity befalls you is because of the deeds that your own hands have wrought, but He overlooks much.﴾ *(ash-Shoorâ 42: 30)*

﴿ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمۡ يَكُ مُغَيِّرٗا نِّعۡمَةً أَنۡعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ قَوۡمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمۡ ... ﴿٥٣﴾﴾

(سورة الأنفال: ٥٣)

﴿That is because Allah would never change the blessings He has bestowed upon a people unless they themselves changed their own attitude and conduct…﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 53)*

Here, Allah (□) informs us that He does not change a favour that He has bestowed upon people unless they change themselves.

Change befalls them when they:

- Exchange obedience to Allah with disobedience;
- Become ungrateful instead of expressing gratitude to Him; and
- Exchange the means to achieve His pleasure with the means to incur His anger.

It is the most appropriate repayment – and never is the Lord unjust to His slaves.

If a person exchanges sin with obedience, Allah exchanges punishment with forgiveness and disgrace with honour:

﴿ ... إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوۡمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمۡۗ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِقَوۡمٖ سُوٓءٗا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَالٖ ﴿١١﴾﴾ (سورة الرعد: ١١)

﴿…Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they themselves change their own attitude and conduct. But once Allah has intended ill for a people, then it cannot be averted, nor will they find, besides Him, any protector.﴾ *(ar-Ra'd 13: 11)*

There are some reports that the Lord mentions:[141]

By My might and majesty, if any of My slaves turn from what I love towards what I hate, I will grant them what they hate in place of what they love. Likewise, if any of My slaves turn from what I hate towards what I love, I will grant them what they love in place of what they hate.

A person has certainly done well by saying:

*If you are amidst a blessing, then safeguard it,*
*For sins indeed cause blessings to be picked.*
*Erase them with obedience to the Lord of the slaves,*
*For the Lord of the slaves is quick to inflict.*
*Be cautious of injustice – do try your best,*
*For wronging others incites divine disgust.*
*Journey with your heart through the world,*
*To see what happens to those, the unjust.*
*These are their homes, remaining after them,*
*Witnessing them, though they do not accuse.*
*Nothing endangered them more than injustice,*
*For this crime especially, punishment ensues.*
*How many gardens they deserted and left,*
*Palaces and more that fell with a scream.*
*They entered the fire, and missed the bliss,*
*And all they enjoyed seems like a mere dream.*

## -35-

Punishment for sin also constitutes the terror and fear that Allah (□) casts into the hearts of the sinners; they are only seen as fearful and scared.

Obedience is Allah's greatest fortress. Those who enter it are secured from the punishments of this world and the hereafter, and those who exit it are surrounded by fears from every angle. If people obey Allah, their fears become places of safety. However, if they disobey Him, their places of safety become frightening.

There are panicky sinners whose hearts are never at ease, just like the wings of a bird. If the wind rattles the door, they say, "They have come for me!" If they hear footsteps, they fear them being the call of death. They assume that every scream is against them and every hazard is aimed at them. Truly, Allah grants security from everything to whoever fears Him, and Allah makes those who do not fear Him afraid of everything.

*Allah has destined since people were created,*
*That fears and crimes be conjugated.*

## -36-

Another punishment is that sin inflicts great estrangement in the heart, and sinners find themselves feeling alienated. This estrangement exists between them and their Lord, between them and the creation, and between them and themselves. The graver their sins become, the more this estrangement intensifies.

The sourest of lives is of the estranged and fearful, and the most pleasant life is that of the reassured. If the sensible were to weigh the difference between the enjoyment of the sin and the fear and estrangement it inflicts, they would understand their pathetic condition and how greatly they have been cheated. They sold reassurance, security, and the sweetness of obedience for the estrangement of sin, and for the fears and dangers ensuing from it that evoke them:

*If sins have invited estrangement to your chest,*
*Divorce them, if you wish, and then find rest.*

The secret behind this is that obedience results in nearness to the Lord, and the nearer one becomes, the more this reassurance strengthens. Sinning results in being distanced from the Lord. As one goes further, the estrangement becomes stronger. The obedient feel estranged from their enemies due to the psychological distance between them, even if they are constantly in their close company. In the same way, people feel reassurance and nearness to those they love, even if they are far from them.

Estrangement (from good) is caused by the veil (on the heart). The thicker this veil becomes, the greater the estrangement. Heedlessness results in estrangement, and the estrangement caused by sin is more severe than this. Even more severe is the estrangement caused by polytheism and disbelief.

You will not find people committing any of these without feeling the estrangement rising upon them in proportion to what they have committed. Estrangement will appear on their faces and hearts. They will feel estranged (from others), and others will feel estranged from them.

## -37-

One punishment is that sin diverts the heart from health and steadfastness and leads it towards illness and deviation. It remains sick, not benefiting from the nutrients its life depends on. This is because the effects of sins on the heart are like the effects of disease on the body. Sins are the chief diseases of the heart, and the only medicine is to abandon them.

Those who journey to Allah have unanimously agreed that the heart is not given its wish until it reaches its Master. It does not reach its Master until it is strong and healthy. It cannot be strong and healthy until its disease

is reversed and becomes its cure, which can only be attained by opposing its desires. Its desires are its disease, and its cure is to oppose them. If the disease becomes established, it kills or nearly does so.

Similarly, those who restrain their desires have paradise as their abode, which is also how their heart is in this world. It is in a lofty paradise, one whose enjoyment is unmatched by any enjoyment. The disparity between the two enjoyments is like the disparity between the bliss of this world and the hereafter. This matter can only be confirmed by those whose heart has experienced both.

Do not presume that the following words of Allah:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلۡأَبۡرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٖ ١٣ وَإِنَّ ٱلۡفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٖ ١٤﴾ (سورة الانفطار: ١٣-١٤)

﴿Verily, the righteous will be in bliss, and verily the wicked will be in the blazing fire.﴾ *(al-Infiṭâr 82: 13-14)*

– are limited to the delight of the hereafter and its blaze. This applies to the three abodes: in this world, in the graves, and in the permanent abode. In all three, some people are in delight and others are in the blaze.

Is enjoyment anything but the enjoyment of the heart?

Is torture anything but the torture of the heart?

What torture is more severe than:

- Fear;
- Worry;
- Grief;
- A chest that feels constricted;
- Being heedless of Allah and the hereafter;
- Being attached to other than Allah;

- Being disconnected from Allah; and
- Being scattered across every valley?

Everything sinners become attached to and love instead of Allah inevitably causes them utter anguish.

Those who love something other than Allah are punished with it three times in this world. Firstly, they are punished with it before acquiring it, until they acquire it. Secondly, after acquiring it, they are punished with the fear of losing it and missing out on it, and the miserable worry over it. Thirdly, the punishment reaches its peak when it is taken from them. These are three different punishments in this world.

As for the grave, there is the punishment that comes with the following:

- Pain of being separated from something that you have no hope will return;
- Pain of missing out on the grand pleasure due to being occupied with its opposite;
- Pain of being veiled from Allah; and
- Pain of regret that tears one apart.

The stress, depression, regret, and grief eat away one's soul, while the insects and worms eat away one's body. What it does to their souls is continuous and ongoing until Allah returns them to their bodies. At that time, the punishment becomes more disastrous and far more bitter.

How does this compare with the ones whose hearts dance with glee, experiencing the company of their Lord, yearning to meet Him, comforted by loving Him, and reassured by remembering Him?

One of them may utter while dying, "O the ecstasy!"

Another may exclaim, “If the people of paradise are in a place like this, they indeed have an excellent life!”

Another may remark, “Pitiful are these worldly folk. They left the world without tasting the most delicious and best of life there!”

Another may exclaim, “If the kings and their descendants knew what we are experiencing, they would have fought us for it with [their] swords.”

Another may assert, “In this world, there is a paradise. Those who do not enter it will not enter the paradise of the hereafter.”

The ones who sold their priceless share for the lowest price and have been cheated before their very eyes, if they had no idea of the product’s worth, they should have asked those who can appraise it!

Amazing is a product whose purchaser is Allah (□) and whose price is the eternal gardens. The ambassador that mitigated the sale and guaranteed the price on behalf of the Purchaser is the Messenger (ﷺ). Yet you sell it for the most humiliating price.

*If this is the act of slaves against themselves,*
*Who thereafter can restore honour to their shelves?*

﴿ ... وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ ۚ ... ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٨)

﴿…Whomever Allah disgraces, none can honour him…﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 18)*

## -38-

Another punishment is that sin blinds the heart’s insight, extinguishes its light, blocks the path to knowledge, and veils the inlets of guidance.

When Imam Mâlik met Imam ash-Shâfi‘i and saw such brilliance, he remarked, “I see that Allah has cast a light into your heart. Do not

extinguish it with the darkness of sin."

This light continues to weaken and dwindle (with sins). The darkness of sin continues to strengthen until the heart is as if on a pitch-black night. How many fatal falls are risked when one does not see? One is like a blind person who walks onto a road at night that is filled with fatal ditches. How difficult is one's safety, and how quick is one's demise.

This darkness strengthens further and overflows from the heart onto the limbs. The heart is eventually overwhelmed with blackness in proportion to its strength. When death comes, it appears in the grave, filling it with darkness. Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«These graves are filled with darkness upon their people, but Allah illuminates them because of my supplication for them.» (Muslim)

When the Promised Day commences and the slaves are gathered, darkness appears on their faces and everyone sees it. Their faces become black like burnt coal. What a punishment! It is unmatched by the pleasures of this world combined, from the first to the last. How, then, (does this compare) with a slave's measly, spoiled, tiring share in a duration that is just a momentary dream? Indeed, Allah is the source of strength.

## -39-

Sin instils an inferiority complex. It makes one belittle oneself until one sees oneself as the most worthless creature, just as acts of obedience nourish the self, purify it, and give it a sense of worth:

﴿قَدۡ أَفۡلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ۝٩ وَقَدۡ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا ۝١٠﴾ (سورة الشمس: ٩-١٠)

﴿He will indeed attain true success who purifies it and he will indeed fail who corrupts it.﴾ *(ash-Shams 91: 9-10)*

The verse means that the ones who caused the inner self to grow, elevate, and appreciate (in value) through obedience to Allah have succeeded. Those who hid, belittled, and allowed it to depreciate by sinning against Allah have failed.

Originally, the word (in this verse) *dassa* means to hide, just like His words:

﴿ ... أَمۡ يَدُسُّهُۥ فِي ٱلتُّرَابِۗ ... ﴿٥٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٥٩)

﴿…or bury her [*yadussuh*] in the dust?...﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 59)*

Likewise, the sinners bury themselves in sin. They also conceal sins, hiding their hideous deeds from other people. Such people become worthless before themselves, worthless before Allah, and worthless before the creation. Obedience and righteousness cause the self to grow and become honoured. They elevate the self until it becomes the noblest, purest, most dignified, and superior while remaining the most humbled, needy, and powerless before Allah. It is through this humility that it attains nobility, empowerment, and growth. Nothing reduces the self like disobedience to Allah, and nothing nourishes, raises, and honours it like obedience to Allah.

## -40-

Sinners remain captives of Satan as yet another punishment, imprisoned by their lusts and shackled by their desires. They become captives who are both imprisoned and chained. No captive is worse in condition than one captured by his greatest enemy. No prison is tighter than the prison of desires, nor is any shackle more hindering than the shackle of lust. How can such people journey to Allah and the abode of the hereafter while their hearts are captured, imprisoned, and shackled? How can any of them take even a single step?

A chained heart is bombarded with dangers from every angle – dangers proportionate to its chains. The example of the heart is that of a bird; the higher it ascends, the further it is from danger. When it descends, dangers swarm around it from every angle as the hadith states, “Satan is the wolf of the human being.” (Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarâni and Abu Nu‘aym)[142]

Just as a sheep is powerless and quick to fall to the wolves, similarly, the heart is inevitably a victim of its wolf when no guardian is appointed for it by Allah. Allah only grants this guardian through taqwâ. Taqwâ is a shield bestowed by Allah. It is an impregnable fortress between a person and the wolf, just as it is a shield between a person and the punishments of this world and the hereafter. The closer a sheep is to the shepherd, the safer it is from the wolf. The further it strays from the shepherd, the closer it is to destruction. The safest a sheep can be is when it remains near the shepherd. “The wolf only takes a sheep that has strayed,” as it is furthest then from the shepherd.

All this asserts that the further a heart is from Allah, the more quickly it is ravaged by danger. As it draws nearer to Allah, the dangers gravitate away from it.

There are varying degrees of being distant from Allah, some more severe than others. Heedlessness distances the heart from Allah. The distance via sin is greater than the distance of heedlessness. The distance via innovation is greater than the distance via sin, and the distance via hypocrisy and polytheism is the greatest.

## -41-

Another punishment is sinners losing their status, reputation, and nobility before Allah and His creation. The most honourable of the creation to Allah is the most pious. The nearest to Him in status is the most obedient, and the

level of obedience to Allah determines a person's status with Him. When someone disobeys Allah and opposes His commands, they fall from His regard; in turn, Allah causes the regard for them to diminish in the hearts of His slaves.

When no regard remains for the person before the creation, and they become insignificant to others, the latter deal with the former on that basis. This person then lives the worst of lives amongst them – unmentioned, not respected, perceived as pitiful, devoid of sanctity… It is impossible to be happy when one is not being mentioned. Being stripped of respect and status invokes anxiety, worry, and grief, leaving no room for happiness and joy. How does this pain compare with the pleasure of sin? Had one not been drunk with lust?

One of the great bounties of Allah upon a person is that He mentions the person in the world and raises the person's reputation. In this way, He has distinguished His Prophets and Messengers above others:

﴿ وَٱذۡكُرۡ عِبَٰدَنَآ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ أُوْلِي ٱلۡأَيۡدِي وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرِ ٤٥ إِنَّآ أَخۡلَصۡنَٰهُم بِخَالِصَةٖ ذِكۡرَى ٱلدَّارِ ٤٦ ﴾ (سورة ص: ٤٥-٤٦)

﴿Remember Our slaves Ibrâheem, Is-ḥâq, and Ya'qoob, men of endurance [in worship] and deep insight. Verily, We chose them by granting them a distinct quality: constantly remembering the hereafter.﴾ *(Ṣâd 38: 45-46)*

In other words, Allah distinguished them with a special quality; they have a beautiful mention in this world. This is that same ﴿honourable renown﴾ that was requested from Him by Prophet Ibrâheem when he asked:

﴿وَٱجۡعَل لِّي لِسَانَ صِدۡقٖ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرِينَ ٨٤ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٨٤)

﴿And grant me an honourable renown among the later nations.﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 84)*

Allah (□) also mentions him and his offspring:

﴿وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٠﴾﴾ (سورة مريم: ٥٠)

﴿We bestowed upon them [manifold] gifts by Our mercy, and We granted them a deservedly lofty renown.﴾ *(Maryam 19: 50)*

Likewise, He informs His Prophet (ﷺ):

﴿وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة الشَّرح: ٤)

﴿And exalted for you your renown?﴾ *(ash-Sharḥ 94: 4)*

The followers of the Messengers have a share of this inheritance in proportion to their obedience and following. Everyone who opposes them has missed out on this in proportion to their opposition and sin.

## -42-

An additional punishment is that sin strips its doers of the praiseworthy, noble titles and garbs them in disgraceful, unpraiseworthy titles. It strips them of titles like *al-mu'min* (the believer), *al-muḥsin* (the doer of good), *al-barr* (the virtuous), *al-muttaqi* (the pious), *al-muṭee'* (the obedient), *al-muneeb* (the oft-returning), *al-wali* (the saint), *al-wari'* (the piously cautious), *aṣ-ṣâliḥ* (the righteous), *al-'âbid* (the worshipper), *al-khâ'if* (the fearful), *al-awwâb* (the penitent), *aṭ-ṭayyib* (the pure), *al-marḍi* (the pleasing), and so on.

Instead, a person is known as *al-fâjir* (the wicked), *al-'âṣi* (the sinner), *al-mukhâlif* (the opposing), *al-musee'* (the evildoer), *al-mufsid* (the corruptor), *al-khabeeth* (the malicious), *as-sakhooṭ* (the angering), *az-zâni* (the fornicator), *as-sâriq* (the thief), *al-qâtil* (the killer), *al-kâdhib* (the liar), *al-khâ'in* (the treacherous), *al-Looṭi* (the homosexual), *qâṭi' ar-raḥim* (the severer of kin), *al-ghâdir* (the betrayer), and so on. These are the titles resulting from sin:

﴿ ... بِئۡسَ ٱلِٱسۡمُ ٱلۡفُسُوقُ بَعۡدَ ٱلۡإِيمَٰنِۚ ... ﴿١١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحُجُرات: ١١)

﴿…What a bad thing it is to be called an evildoer after having believed…﴾ *(al-Ḥujurât 49: 11)*

Wretched are those who have earned the anger of the King (Allah) Who avenges. They are admitted into the flames and to a life of disgrace and shame.

Those who earn praiseworthy titles are rewarded with the pleasure of the Most Merciful and admittance into the gardens. These titles ensure nobility for their bearers, irrespective of their class among humanity. If sins had no punishment other than not earning these titles and their implications, it would have been a sufficient deterrent for every sound mind. By the same token, if the reward for obedience were nothing but attaining these (noble) names and their implications, every sound mind would go after it. Ultimately, no one can withhold what Allah (□) gives, or give what He withholds; nor can anyone bring close what He has distanced, or distance what He brings close:

﴿ ... وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكۡرِمٍۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفۡعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۩ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٨)

﴿…Whomever Allah disgraces, none can honour him. Verily, Allah does whatever He wills.﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 18)*

## -43-

One punishment is the particular role of sin in devitalizing the mind. You will not find two rational individuals, one obedient to Allah and the other sinful, without the mind of the obedient one stronger and sharper. The

obedient one has more sensible thoughts, wiser opinions, and correctness as a comrade.

For this reason, the address of the Qur'an is always to those of understanding and sound mind:

﴿ ... وَٱتَّقُونِ يَٰٓأُوْلِي ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٩٧)

﴿…So fear Me, O people of understanding.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 197)*

﴿ ... فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ يَٰٓأُوْلِي ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١٠٠)

﴿…So fear Allah, O men of understanding, so that you may prosper.﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 100)*

﴿ ... وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٦٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٦٩)

﴿…but none will pay heed except people of understanding.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 269)*

There are many other similar verses.

How can sinners be of sound mind when they are in His Grasp in His world and know that He sees and witnesses them, yet they disobey Him openly, using His bounties to anger Him? At every such moment, they invoke upon themselves His anger and curse. They incite Him to distance them, exile themselves from His door, and neglect and forsake themselves, so He leaves them alone with their enemies. At every such moment, they fall from His favour. They are also deprived of the following:

- The breeze of His pleasure;
- His love;
- The comfort of closeness to Him;
- The prosperity of becoming His neighbour; and

- Looking at His Countenance amidst His cherished slaves.

This happens with the loss of many more virtues allocated to those who obey Him. It incurs many more punishments that await those who defy Him.

What sliver of sensibility do such people have? They prefer the pleasure of a moment, a day, or a year – which then ends like a dream that never was – over eternal bliss and massive success. Are the joys of this world and the hereafter even comparable? Were it not for a mind that comprehends and, in turn, holds that person liable, such a person would have been classified among the insane. In fact, the insane may be in a better condition and safer from the consequences.

Sin devitalizes the mind in worldly matters; were it not for this weakness being shared by all, the obedient ones would have noticed the weakness of the sinner's mind. Unfortunately, the epidemic is widespread and insanity comes in many shades.

What a wonder… Had the minds been healthy, they would have realized that pleasure, felicity, happiness, and a good life can only be attained through His pleasure – just as only pain and punishment are encountered through His wrath. In His pleasure, we truly find:

- The comfort of the eyes;
- The joy of the spirit;
- The life of the hearts;
- The delight of the souls;
- The good life; and
- The purest pleasure.

If a speck's weight of it is weighed against all the delights of this world, they would not be equal. In fact, if the heart experiences even the

smallest share of it, it would not accept this entire world and what it contains in exchange.

The pious still enjoy their share of this world more than those who want luxury. Their enjoyment is not spoiled in the least by what spoils the enjoyment of the people of luxury – worries, grief, sadness, and adversity. Instead, the pious attain two enjoyments and await another two enjoyments greater than them. As for what pains they experience en route to it, the matter is as Allah mentions:

﴿ ... إِن تَكُونُوا۟ تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۖ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ ... ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٠٤)

﴿…If you are suffering hardships, they are also suffering hardships; but you hope for something from Allah that they cannot hope for…﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 104)*

*Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh* (there is none worthy of worship other than Allah)! How feeble are the minds of those who have sold pearls for dung and musk for manure. They have sold the companionship of those whom Allah has favoured – the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous[143] – in exchange for the companionship of those who have earned Allah's anger and curse, those for whom He has prepared the hellfire. What an awful destination!

## -44-

One of the greatest punishments for sin is that it severs the relationship between individuals and their Lord. When this severing occurs, such people become disconnected from every avenue of good and connected to every avenue of evil. What success, ease, or life is there for someone disconnected from the avenues of good? What success could there be for those separated from their Ally and Guardian, without Whom they cannot

defend themselves in even the blink of an eye? They depend on Him, and there is no compensation for losing Him.

How is survival possible when instead, they have been attached to the avenues of evil fused between them and their worst enemy? How can they survive when their enemy becomes their ally and their Guardian forsakes them? No soul knows what agonies and punishments this severing (with Allah) and that connection (with Satan) brings.

One of the salaf states:

> I have found that people are between Allah and Satan. If Allah forsakes them, Satan seizes them. If Allah protects them, Satan is unable to touch them:

﴿ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِۦٓ ۗ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُۥ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِى وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّۢ ۚ بِئْسَ لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَدَلًا ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٠)

> ﴿And [remember] when We said to the angels: Prostrate before Adam, and they [all] prostrated except Iblees. He was one of the jinn, so he rebelled against the command of his Lord. Will you then take him and his progeny as allies instead of Me, even though they are enemies to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrongdoers!﴾ *(al-Kahf 18: 50)*

Allah (□) mentions to His slaves: I honoured your father (Adam), gave him a high status, preferred him over others, and I commanded all my angels to prostrate to him in reverence and respect. They obeyed Me, but My enemy and his (Iblees) refused; he defied My command and refused to obey Me. After all that, how could you take him and his descendants as allies other than Me? How could you obey them by disobeying Me? How could you ally with them in what conflicts with My pleasure, even though he (Iblees) is your greatest enemy? How could you ally with an enemy I have commanded you to oppose?

Those who ally with an enemy of the King become equal in enmity to Him. Love and obedience are certainly incomplete until one has enmity for the enemies of the One obeyed and until one allies with His allies. If you ally with the King's enemies, it is impossible for you to have allegiance to Him. That is the case even when the King's enemy was not (originally) your enemy, so how about when this enemy is your actual enemy? How is it when the enmity between you and that person is greater than the enmity between sheep and wolves? How could any sensible individual ally with their own enemy and the enemy of their Ally and Guardian when they have no Guardian but Him?

Allah's warnings ﴿though they are enemies to you?﴾ and ﴿rebelled against the command of his Lord﴾ draw our attention to the dreadfulness of this allegiance (with Iblees).

These warnings clarify Iblees's enmity both toward the Lord and humankind. Each of these is a reason for enmity towards him. What sort of allegiance is this? What type of exchange is this? What a wretched exchange the wrongdoers make.

This address also appears to contain a marvellous subtle censure. Allah indicates that His enmity towards Iblees was for our sake. He (Iblees) refused to prostrate to our father Adam along with His angels… Yet we now make a peace treaty with him (Iblees)?

## -45-

One of its punishments is that sin obliterates the blessings in one's lifespan, sustenance, knowledge, actions, and obedience.

In a nutshell, it erases the blessings of one's life and religion. Those who disobey Allah are the least blessed in lifespan, religion, and livelihood.

In fact, the blessings of the earth were not eradicated by anything but the sins of the creatures:

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ... ﴿٩٦﴾﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٩٦)

﴿If only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would indeed have opened up for them blessings from heaven and earth…﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 96)*

﴿وَأَلَّوِ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَٰهُم مَّآءً غَدَقًا ﴿١٦﴾ لِّنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ ... ﴿١٧﴾﴾ (سورة الجن: ١٦-١٧)

﴿If they had steadfastly followed the right way, We would have bestowed upon them abundant water [and provision], so as to test them thereby…﴾ *(al-Jinn 72: 16-17)*

Thawbân reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«A person is certainly deprived of sustenance because of a sin he has committed.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Mâjah, al-Baghawi, and al-Ḥâkim; some narrators in its chain are unknown)

In another hadith, it was reported that he said:

«The Pure Spirit (Jibreel) taught me that no soul would die until it has fully received its sustenance. So fear Allah and beautify the request, for what Allah has can only be attained through obeying Him. Allah has deemed comfort and happiness to come from contentment and certainty, and worry and grief to come from doubt and displeasure.» (Authenticated by al-Albâni)

This report has been previously mentioned:

> I am the Lord; none is worthy of worship but Me. When I am pleased, I bless, and My blessings are endless. When I am angered, I curse, and My curse reaches the seventh descendent [or progeny].[144]

Vastness in sustenance and actions is not indicated by its abundance, nor is the length of life by numerous months and years; vastness in sustenance is through the blessing it contains.

We have previously established how lifespan is the duration of a person's life (on earth) and that someone heedless of Allah and busy with others is not actually living since the lives of animals are better than the life of such a person.

A human being's life is contingent upon the life of the heart and soul. The heart has no life unless it:

- Knows its Originator;
- Loves Him;
- Worships only Him;
- Flees to Him
- Finds comfort in remembering Him; and
- Enjoys being close to Him.

Those deprived of this life have certainly been deprived of all good, regardless of compensation or worldly gain. This entire world is no compensation for that life. There is compensation for anything else that a person misses out on. However, nothing can compensate for missing out on Allah.

How can being inherently poor compensate for being inherently rich? How can being inherently incompetent compensate for being inherently capable? How can the dead compensate for the Living Who does not die? How can the created compensate for the Creator? How can the inherently

powerless and non-existent compensate for Him, whose unchanging qualities include life, perfection, generosity, and mercy? How can a person who owns not even the equivalent of a speck's weight compensate for the One Who owns the heavens and the earth?

Sinning certainly eradicates the blessings of one's sustenance and lifespan, for Satan is involved with those who sin. His authority is over them (these sinners), and his focus is directed at this assembly and its people. Everything Satan becomes involved with is stripped of blessings. This is why Allah's name should be mentioned during eating, drinking, dressing, riding, and intimacy. Allah's name evokes blessings. It chases away Satan, invites blessings, and removes anything contrary to them.

Anything not done for Allah is devoid of any blessings, for the Lord alone is the One Who blesses. Blessings come only from Him, and all that is attributed to Him is blessed. His words are blessed, His Messenger (ﷺ) is blessed, His believing slave who benefits His creation is blessed, and His Sacred House (the Kaaba) is blessed. His Sacred Land[145] (ash-Shâm) is a blessed land, which He has described as blessed in six places in His Book.[146]

No one blesses but He alone, and nothing is blessed except what is attributed to Him – His worship, His love, and His pleasure. The entire universe is attributed to Him via His Lordship and His creation. All objects, statements, and actions distant from Him are devoid of blessing and goodness. Everything near to Him contains blessings in proportion to its closeness to Him.

The opposite of blessing is cursing. A land, an individual or an action that Allah curses is the furthest from goodness and blessings. Anything involved with such things also becomes devoid of any blessings whatsoever.

Allah (□) has cursed His enemy Iblees (Satan) and made him the creature most distant from Him. Whatever is related to Satan has a share of

Allah's curse in proportion to its nearness and connection (to Iblees).

From this angle, sin greatly spoils the blessings in one's lifespan, sustenance, knowledge, and actions. Every moment in which Allah was disobeyed, and every limb, action, and form of wealth, status or knowledge with which Allah was disobeyed, no longer belong to the individual. In effect, one retains none of one's lifespan, wealth, strength, reputation, knowledge or actions unless they were used to obey Allah.

Some people live in this world for a hundred years or more. Yet their lifespan does not reach even the equivalent of ten years (in reality). Similarly, some amass enormous sums of gold and silver. Yet, in reality, their wealth does not amount to even a thousand dirhams. The same applies to status and knowledge.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Indeed, the world is cursed and what is in it is cursed, except for the remembrance of Allah and everything conducive to that; the knowledgeable person; and the learning person.» (A 'reliable but odd' hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi; according to al-Albâni, its chain of narration is weak)[147]

In another report, Jâbir said, "This world and what it contains is cursed, except for what is for Allah."[148]

These are the blessings that He has allotted to us. Allah is the source of strength, and upon Him we rely.

## -46-

As further punishment, the sinner becomes one of the lowliest of creatures after having the potential to be one of the elite. Allah has created His creation in two types: the upper elite and the lowly. He has made 'illiyeen (the heights of paradise) the destination of the upper-elite and the lowest

pits a destination for the lowly. He has exalted the obedient in this world and the hereafter. He has also made the disobedient the lowliest in this world and the hereafter. He has made the obedient the dearest of His creation to Him and the disobedient the most insignificant of His creation to Him. He has given power and honour to the obedient. Likewise, He has humiliated and debased the disobedient.

Ibn ‘Umar (□) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«I was sent with the sword between the hands of the Hour so that Allah may be worshipped alone without any partners. My sustenance was made (to be) under the shade of my spear. Debasement and humiliation were cast upon those who opposed My command.» (A reliable hadith recorded by Aḥmad)[149]

Whenever someone commits a sin, the person plummets a degree and continues to plummet until they become one of the lowliest (creatures). Whenever someone performs an act of obedience, the person ascends a degree and continues ascending until they become one of the most elite.

In a single day of someone’s life, that person may ascend from one angle and fall from another, in which case one would belong to the class of whichever (angle) is dominant. The one who ascends a hundred degrees and falls one degree is unlike the one whose condition is diametrically opposite.

There is a great mistake here that the people fall into. A person may plummet further than the distance between the east and the west and between the heavens and the earth, and ascending even a thousand degrees may not compensate for this one fall. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«A person may utter a word carelessly and consequently fall into the hellfire further than the distance between the east and the west.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

What ascension can counter this fall? Falling is inevitable for a human being, but some people (merely) fall into heedlessness. When such people awaken from their heedlessness, they return to their former level or higher, depending on their alertness.

Another may fall unintentionally into unlawful matters. When the person returns to obedience, it may be to the former level, or it may be to a lower level, or possibly to a higher level. This is because the person may return with greater or less zeal than before – or the zeal may be just as it was.

Another may fall into sin, whether minor or major. Such a person needs true repentance and a genuine effort to reassume the former rank.

There is a difference of opinion: Does someone return to the original level after repentance, considering that repentance erases the effect of the sin as if it never existed? Or does a person not return (to the original level) since repentance (solely) results in waiving the punishment but does not allow one to reach the level previously reached?

Some indicate the person had been prepared, at the moment of disobedience, to climb higher through acts of obedience. It is like one who profits daily from one's wealth; the more this wealth multiplies, the more the profit multiplies with it. For the duration of the sin, the person fails to ascend and profit from their deeds. When the person returns to obedience, they resume the climb from below (from the level after the sin). In contrast, previously, they were climbing from above, and so there is a great disparity between them.

They explain that it is like two people climbing endless ladders at an equal pace. One descends just a step below and resumes the climb. The other does not descend at all. The one who did not descend must be higher than the one who did.

Shaykh al-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah takes a reasonable, intermediate view between the two opinions. He explains that the truth is some who repent

return to a higher level, some to the same level, and some do not reach their original level.

I say that it is based on the strength and perfection of their repentance. It depends on what this sin has generated in the person of humility, surrender, dedication, caution, and weeping from the fear of Allah. These matters may strengthen until the person returns at an even higher degree, becoming better after repentance.

In such cases, the sin may be a mercy for these sinners. It expels the disease of conceit, rids them of their self-confidence and security in their deeds, and enables them to place their cheek with humility on the doorstep of their Master and Guardian. It teaches them their worth and makes them realize their urgent need for being protected by their Master and Guardian, and for His forgiveness and pardon.

It (the sin) removes the pride of obedience from their hearts; it breaks that nose so they cannot raise it arrogantly, and breaks whatever they felt made them superior to others. It makes them stand between the Hands of their Lord as mistaken sinners. It makes them stand with their heads lowered, ashamed, afraid, and trembling before Him, belittling their acts of obedience and dreading the magnitude of their sin. They learn about themselves through their deficiency and imperfection. They come to know their Lord as distinguished in perfection, praise, and fidelity.

Just as it was said:

*Allah was singled out with fidelity and praise,*
*While all of the blame filled humanity's days.*

These people regard any blessings Allah bestows on them as too much; they see themselves as unworthy of these blessings and realize they do not deserve them.

For every difficulty or affliction that reaches them, they realize they deserve an even greater one. They see that their Master had been kind to

them by not punishing them for their sins fully or sometimes even partially. In fact, He did not punish for the smallest of them.

These people realize that the punishment they deserve cannot be borne by the sturdiest mountains, let alone by a weak and incompetent slave. This is because sin, no matter how small, is still a sin before its recipient. Here its recipient is the Most Great, with nothing greater, more exalted, more majestic, or more beautiful than He. He is the Blesser Who has granted all forms of blessings, big and small, and so how horrendous and repulsive an act it is. Meeting the greats, nobles, and leaders of humanity with anything like this would be highly offensive to all believers and disbelievers alike.

The lowliest of people and the least chivalrous are those who meet (others) with offences. How can they insult the Great King, Owner, and God of the heavens and earth? His mercy surpasses His anger, and His forgiveness surpasses His punishment. If not, the earth would have been crushed upon those who met Him with something inappropriate. Were it not for His forbearance and forgiveness, the heavens and earth would have quaked from the sins of His slaves:

﴿ ۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُمۡسِكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ أَن تَزُولَاۚ وَلَئِن زَالَتَآ إِنۡ أَمۡسَكَهُمَا مِنۡ أَحَدٖ مِّنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورٗا ٤١ ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٤١)

﴿Verily, Allah sustains the heavens and the earth, lest they decline, and if they were to decline, there is no one who could sustain them other than Him. Verily, He is Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.﴾ *(Fâṭir 35: 41)*

Reflect on how this verse is sealed with two of His names: al-Ḥaleem (the Most Forbearing) and al-Ghafoor (the Forgiving). Reflect how this points out that were it not for His forbearance with the criminals and His forgiveness of the sinners, the heavens and earth would not have continued to exist.

He informs us about some of the disbelief of His slaves:

﴿تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرۡنَ مِنۡهُ وَتَنشَقُّ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَتَخِرُّ ٱلۡجِبَالُ هَدًّا ٩٠﴾

(سورة مريم: ٩٠)

﴿At which the heavens might almost be torn apart, the earth split asunder, and the mountains come tumbling down.﴾ *(Maryam 19: 90)*

Allah (□) removed our parents from paradise for a single sin they committed, through which they violated His prohibition. He cursed Iblees and exiled him from the kingdom of the heavens and earth for a single sin he committed, where he opposed His command. Regarding us fools, our condition is just like these words:

*We follow sins with sins and yet still hope,*
*For the levels in gardens with bliss unending.*
*Yet we know that our parents were expelled,*
*From His supreme kingdom with one sinning.*

The point is that one may be at a better and higher level after repentance than before the sin. A sin may also weaken one's zeal, diminish one's determination, and sicken the heart. That continues as long as the medicine of repentance does not aid one's return to the original state of health. In such a case, one will not return to the original level. The disease may also be removed, allowing one's health to return to its former state. Thus one resumes one's former deeds and reclaims one's former rank.

These are all when the fall is into sin. When the fall is into a matter that threatens the very bedrock of one's faith, like with doubts and hypocrisy, such a fall leaves no hope for ascension unless one completely returns to Islam.

Sin punishes by inciting against the sinners creatures who would not previously have dared to attack them. The devils become hopeful and attempt to harm, mislead, whisper, scare, and worry them. They venture to make them forget what leads to their welfare, endangering them. The devils are then sent upon these (unfortunate) people, relentlessly urging them on towards the disobedience of Allah.

The devils of humanity invest all their power in harming such people during their presence and absence. Their families, servants, children, and neighbours become at odds with them – even the animals.

One of the salaf said, “When I disobey Allah, I recognize that in the manners of my riding animal and my wife.”

If they are just, those in authority are stirred up against these people. They impose legal punishments due to their violation of the limits of Allah. Even a person’s temperament becomes wild and aggressive. If the person urges it towards good, it refuses to comply and be led. Instead, it directs the person towards destruction, regardless of whether they like it or not.

All this is because obedience is the Lord’s fortress, which grants security to whoever enters it. A person who walks out of that fortress becomes a victim of highway robbers and others. The extent that the person dares to sin against Allah is the extent to which these creatures and dangers reach them, and nothing remains to defend them.

Remembrance of Allah, obedience to Him, charity, guiding the ignorant, enjoining good, and forbidding evil all provide a shield to defend the individual. They are like the immunity which prevents and combats disease. When this immunity weakens, the threat of disease and destruction becomes more probable. The person is then forever in need of something to defend themselves.

The effects of good and evil deeds push against one another, and the outcome favours the stronger force, as mentioned previously. Whenever the power of good deeds strengthens, the defence becomes stronger, as

mentioned before. ‘Allah defends those who believe,’ and belief is statement and action. The defence is proportionate to the strength of the person’s faith – and Allah is the source of strength.

## -48-

As an additional punishment, sin betrays the sinner when they are most in need. Everyone needs to know what leads to benefit or harm in their livelihood and appointment (that is, in the afterlife). The most knowledgeable is the person most informed of the details of these issues. The strongest and wisest are those able to overcome the carnal self, use it to their benefit, and restrain it from causing harm.

People vary regarding this because of their disparate knowledge, ambitions, and stations. The most knowledgeable people are those most aware of the causes of prosperity and doom. The most guided are those who prefer the former over the latter, just as the most foolish do the reverse.

Sins betray people when they need to acquire this knowledge and attempt to prefer the nobler, more permanent share (of reward in paradise) over the lowly, short-lived share (on earth). Sins veil people from seeing the virtue of this knowledge and occupying themselves with what is more worthy and beneficial in both worlds.

When someone needs to get out of a predicament, the person is betrayed by the heart, soul, and limbs. This is the example of a person whose sword has rusted until it has become fused into the scabbard, so it refuses to come out when the person attempts to draw it. Then the enemy appears, seeking to kill. The person takes hold of the sword’s handle and earnestly tries to pull it out, but it does not comply. Thus, the enemy storms forward and overcomes the person.

Similarly, the heart rusts from its sins until it becomes debilitated with the disease. When it later needs to fight the enemy, it can offer nothing. In reality, the heart is what the person fights, combats, and marches forward with, and the limbs are followers of the heart. If the heart's weakness prevents it from defending the person, what can be expected from its non-existence?

The same applies to the carnal self.[150] It becomes polluted with desires and sins and is no longer at peace. Subsequently, these evil desires strengthen and fortify, weakening the 'self at peace'[151] and eventually leaving evil in control of the person.

The 'self at peace' may eventually perish altogether, leaving no hope for life. Such a person is 'dead' (in this life) and likewise has no real life in the hereafter to benefit from. This life leads to nothing but pain.

The problem is that when one is affected by difficulty, affliction or disaster, one is betrayed by one's heart, tongue, and limbs. They become hindrances and do not let one achieve the most beneficial things. One's heart does not resort to relying on Allah, confiding in Him, placing one's trust in Him, or being humbled and broken between His Hands. One's tongue does not consent to remember Him either, and if one remembers Him with the tongue, the heart is absent. This prevents their unison, which would have deemed the remembrance effective. The heart and tongue do not focus concurrently on what is being remembered. If one remembers or supplicates, it is with an absent-minded and distracted heart. If one wishes that one's limbs would affect a cure through an act of obedience, they (limbs) refuse to comply and conform.

All these are the effects of sin. It is like weak leaders with an army to defend them against the enemy. Yet, they forsake, weaken, and neglect their soldiers until they waste away. They then summon the soldiers when the enemy attacks and wish they would make the strongest effort to defend themselves, but they are powerless.

In addition, there is something more horrifying and painful than all this, and that is one's heart and tongue betraying one at death as one moves on to Allah. Perhaps one may even find it impossible to utter the *shahâdah* (the testimony of faith). Many who have seen those dying while afflicted with this matter bear witness.

Someone was told to say *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*, but the person remarked, "Oh, oh… I am unable to say it!"

Someone else was told to say *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*, but the person replied, "Checkmate, I beat you…" Then he died.

Someone else was asked to recite *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*, but instead, the person recited poetry and then died.

Another was told to say *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*, but he began singing, "*Tâ ta nâ…tan ta nâ…*" until he died.

The same was said to another who remarked, "How can saying it benefit me when I have committed every imaginable sin?" That person also died without saying it.

It was said to another who asked, "What will it avail me when I know I have not offered a single prayer to Allah?" The person did not say it.

It was said to another who replied, "I do not believe in what you say." This person did not say it before he died.

It was said to another who answered, "Whenever I wish to say it, my tongue refuses to utter it."

I was told by someone who attended to a dying beggar that the latter kept saying, "For Allah, a penny for Allah, a penny for Allah…" until he died.

A trader told me that he witnessed a family member who was dying. They were prompting him to say *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*, but he kept saying,

“This item is cheap… That is a great deal… This is…” until he died.

*Subḥân Allâh*! How many lessons have people seen from this alone? Certainly, the hidden affairs of those who are dying are greater.

Satan can subdue even people with strength, awareness, and clear-mindedness. He uses them to disobey Allah. He distracts their hearts from remembering Allah; stops their tongues from mentioning Him; and prevents their limbs from obeying Him. What can be expected from such people when their strength has departed and their hearts and souls are busy with the agonies of death?

Satan has collected all his strength and zeal and focused it with all his power against these people. It is his chance and the last deed, so the strongest the Satan assails a dying person is during this moment. Also, the person’s weakest state is during this moment. Who do you think can survive these conditions?

At this point:

﴿ يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱلۡقَوۡلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَفِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۖ وَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَۚ وَيَفۡعَلُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ ٢٧ ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٢٧)

﴿Allah will make steadfast those who believe, with the word that stands firm, in the life of this world and in the hereafter. But Allah leaves the wrongdoers to go astray; Allah does whatever He wills.﴾ *(Ibrâheem 14: 27)*

How can a good end be granted to those whose hearts Allah (ﷻ) has made heedless of His remembrance, who have followed their desires, and whose affairs have forever been neglected? A good end is far from those hearts that are distant from Allah (ﷻ). It is far from those who are negligent of Him, enslaved to their desires, and prisoners of their lusts. It is far from those whose tongues have ceased to remember Him, whose limbs are prevented from obeying Him, and who are busy disobeying Him. It is very

far-fetched that such individuals would be granted the success of a good end to life.

The fear of an evil end has broken the backs of the pious. However, it is almost as if the wrongdoers and sinners (think they) have received a signed guarantee of security.

﴿أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْمَٰنٌ عَلَيْنَا بَٰلِغَةٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۙ إِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ سَلْهُمْ أَيُّهُم بِذَٰلِكَ زَعِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾ (سورة القلم: ٣٩-٤٠)

﴿Or have you received a solemn promise, binding upon Us until the Day of Resurrection, that you will have whatever you decide? Ask them which of them can guarantee that.﴾ *(al-Qalam 68: 39-40)*

Just as it was said:

*O you who, despite the act, feel secure from Him,*
*Has there come to you a promise of security?*
*You combined security with following whim,*
*One of these alone in a person brings calamity.*
*While the pious, on the road of being fearful,*
*Chose to ride – yet this road you dismiss frugally.*
*You neglected planting when it was seed time,*
*Now, as people harvest, you plant in futility.*
*Most amazing though is your disinterest,*
*In forever's home – for a life without stability.*
*Tell me, by Allah, who is the true fool?*
*You? Or the trader cheated only momentarily?*

Sin blinds the heart. If it does not blind it, it weakens its insight, as previously mentioned. When the heart blinds or weakens, it becomes incapable of recognizing guidance. It becomes weak to implement guidance and enjoin it upon others to the extent that its strength and insight have weakened.

The completeness of the human being revolves around two factors: knowing truth from falsehood and preferring truth over falsehood. Individuals only vary in the sight of Allah in this world and the hereafter because of their various levels in these two elements. These are also the same two for which Allah praised His Prophets in His words:

﴿ وَٱذۡكُرۡ عِبَٰدَنَآ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ أُوْلِي ٱلۡأَيۡدِي وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرِ ﴿٤٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة ص: ٤٥)

﴿Remember Our slaves Ibrâheem, Is-ḥâq and Ya‘qoob, men of strength and deep insight.﴾ *(Ṣâd 38: 45)*

Strength here refers to the ability to enact the truth and deep insight refers to clear-sightedness in religion. Allah has described them as fully realizing the truth and executing it completely.

People are divided into four categories regarding this matter:

1. The first category is the noblest; these people are the most honoured before Allah (□).
2. The second category is the opposite. It consists of those who are neither aware of the religion nor have the strength to follow the truth. These are the majority of creation. Seeing them is an eyesore, a fever for the souls, and an illness for the hearts. They crowd the earth, raise the prices, and their companionship brings only shame and disgrace.
3. The third category comprises those who are aware of the guidance and know of it, but these individuals are weak. They do not have the strength to follow it or incite others towards it. This is the condition of

weak believers. The strong believers are better and more beloved to Allah than they are.[152]

4. The fourth category comprises those who possess strength, ambition, and determination but have a weak awareness of religion. Such people can barely differentiate between Allah's allies and Satan's allies. They consider everything dark a date and everything white edible. They mistake swelling for a lean piece of meat and consider beneficial medicine poison.

None of these (except for the first category) qualify as leaders in the religion, nor should they be. Allah informs us:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢٤)

﴿We made some of them leaders, guiding people by Our command, because they were patient and steadfast, and they believed with certainty in Our revelations.﴾ *(as-Sajdah 32: 24)*

With patience and certainty in His signs, they attained leadership in religion. Allah excludes them from the category of losers when He swears by the time in which the losers and winners invest their efforts:

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴿٣﴾﴾ (سورة العصر: ١-٣)

﴿By Time, verily man is in a state of utter loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to hold fast to the truth and exhort one another to hold fast to patience.﴾ *(al-'Aṣr 103: 1-3)*

It was not sufficient for them to recognize the truth and persevere with it; they had to enjoin one another to it, guide to it, and encourage people to follow it.

If everyone but these are losers, then understand that sins and disobedience blind the heart and weaken its vision until it cannot recognize the truth properly. They weaken its strength and determination until it cannot persevere with it. Their repetition may pollute the heart until its perception and progress are reversed.

When this happens, one perceives falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood, and one perceives goodness as evil and evil as goodness. One digresses from one's quest and is diverted from one's journey towards Allah and the home of the hereafter. One begins to journey to where the pitiful souls reside. These souls are satisfied with this worldly life and reassured by it. They have been distracted from Allah and His signs and abandoned preparing to meet Him.

If there were no punishment for sins other than this punishment alone, it should be enough encouragement to keep oneself away from them. Allah is the source of strength.

Similarly, acts of obedience illuminate, brighten, and polish the heart. They also strengthen and empower it until it becomes like a flawless mirror that beams with light. When Satan draws near it, he is struck by its light, just as those (devils) who eavesdrop are struck by the shooting stars.

Satan flees from such a heart faster than a wolf flees from a lion. The person vanquishes Satan and leaves him fallen on the ground. The devils gather around him and ask one another, "What is the matter with him?" They are told, "A human vanquished him," or "The glance of a human defeated him!"

*A glance, coming from a bright, liberated heart,*
*That nearly incinerates the devils with its light.*

Can this heart ever equal a heart filled with dark corners and conflicting desires, one which Satan has made his homeland and prepared as his dwelling? Each morning, he salutes him by saying, "O precious companion, O you who will not prosper in this world or the hereafter!"

﴿ وَمَن يَعۡشُ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ نُقَيِّضۡ لَهُۥ شَيۡطَٰنٗا فَهُوَ لَهُۥ قَرِينٞ ٣٦ وَإِنَّهُمۡ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمۡ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَيَحۡسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم مُّهۡتَدُونَ ٣٧ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَنَا قَالَ يَٰلَيۡتَ بَيۡنِي وَبَيۡنَكَ بُعۡدَ ٱلۡمَشۡرِقَيۡنِ فَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡقَرِينُ ٣٨ وَلَن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ إِذ ظَّلَمۡتُمۡ أَنَّكُمۡ فِي ٱلۡعَذَابِ مُشۡتَرِكُونَ ٣٩ ﴾ (سورة الزُّخرُف: ٣٦-٣٩)

﴿Whoever turns away from the reminder of the Most Gracious [the Qur'an], We will assign to him a devil to be his constant companion. Verily, they [the devils] bar them from the [right] path, but they think that they are rightly guided. Then when [such a one] comes to Us, he will say [to his devil companion]: Would that there was between me and you the distance between east and west. What a wretched companion! [It will be said to them:] As you have done wrong, it will not benefit you today that you are to share the punishment.﴾ *(az-Zukhruf 43: 36-39)*

Allah informs us about those blinded from His remembrance and those who ignore His Book that He sent down upon His Messenger (ﷺ). Allah also informs us about those whose insight becomes blinded from understanding it, reflecting on it, and understanding what He intends by it. Allah appoints for each one a devil as punishment for turning away from His Book. That devil becomes the individual's permanent companion who does not leave him, whether at home or travelling; that devil becomes their cohort and relative. How awful a cohort and how awful a relative!

Allah informs us that the devil diverts the person from the road that leads to Him and His paradise. This lost individual who has been diverted assumes he is on the road of guidance. When these two companions come forward on the Day of Resurrection, one will say to the other: ﴿Would that there was between me and you the distance between east and west. What a wretched companion!﴾ *(43: 38)*

You were a wretched companion to me in the worldly life. You misled me after true guidance came to me, diverted me from the truth, and

misguided me until I died… How wretched a companion you are to me on this Day!

Since afflicted people are somewhat consoled when others share in their affliction, Allah informs us that this does not apply to the companions in punishment. The companion does not find any comfort or the slightest relief in another companion having the same punishment, despite afflictions being alleviated in this world when experiences are shared. This is just as al-Khansâ' stated as she eulogized her brother Ṣakhr:

*Were it not for the many weepers around me,*
*Over their brothers, I would have killed myself.*
*Though none cry for the likes of my brother,*
*Nonetheless, through it, my soul consoles itself.*
*O Ṣakhr, never will I ever forget you,*
*Until I part with life and meet burial myself.*

Allah (□) has forbidden this element of comfort from the residents of hell: ﴿As you have done wrong, it will not benefit you today that you are to share the punishment﴾ *(43: 39)*.

## -50-

Sin, as one of its punishments, supplies a person's enemy with means against the person. It strengthens the enemy's army to combat him. Allah (□) tests one with an enemy that never leaves one alone, even for the blink of an eye. This companion never sleeps or becomes distracted. This enemy and their tribe see the person from where he does not see them. The enemy exhausts his efforts opposing the person at every moment and employs every plot against him.

This enemy seeks the aid of his brothers from the jinn and the human beings. He sets the ropes for such people, digs pits for them, surrounds

them with traps, and places nets around them.

He tells his henchmen, “There are your enemies and the enemies of your father. Do not let them escape! Do not let them be in paradise while you are in hellfire! Do not let them receive mercy while you are cursed! You know we were disgraced, cursed, and distanced from the mercy of Allah. This was all because of these people. So make your efforts to ensure they become our partners in this disaster since we will not be partners with the righteous in paradise.”

Allah (ﷻ) informs us about our enemy and commands us to make ample preparations against him. Allah knew that Adam (ﷺ) and his children had been tried by this enemy and his attack against them. He supplied them with armies and soldiers with which they could face the enemy just as He supplied the enemy with armies and soldiers. He established jihad in this world for the duration of one’s lifespan, which, in comparison to the hereafter, is equivalent to one of its breaths:

﴿۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشۡتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمۡ وَأَمۡوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلۡجَنَّةَۚ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقۡتُلُونَ وَيُقۡتَلُونَۖ ... ﴿١١١﴾﴾ (سورة التوبة: ١١١)

﴿Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their wealth, in return for which paradise will be theirs; they fight in His cause, and they slay and are slain…﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 111)*

He informs us that this promise was confirmed in the noblest of His scriptures: Torah, Injeel, and Qur’an. In addition, He informs us that none is truer to His promise than He. He commands them to rejoice over this transaction. Let whoever wishes to know its worth assess the matter. Who is the Buyer? What is the price invested in this product? On Whose Hand was this contract officiated? What success is greater than this, and what transaction is more profitable?

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ هَلۡ أَدُلُّكُمۡ عَلَىٰ تِجَٰرَةٖ تُنجِيكُم مِّنۡ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٖ ١٠ تُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُجَٰهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمۡوَٰلِكُمۡ وَأَنفُسِكُمۡۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ١١ يَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡ ذُنُوبَكُمۡ وَيُدۡخِلۡكُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةٗ فِي جَنَّٰتِ عَدۡنٖۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ١٢ وَأُخۡرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَاۖ نَصۡرٞ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَتۡحٞ قَرِيبٞۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ١٣ ﴾ (سورة الصف: ١٠-١٣)

﴿O you who believe, shall I tell you about a deal that will save you from a painful punishment? Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and strive and fight, offering your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah. That is better for you, if only you knew. [If you do that] He will forgive you your sins and admit you to gardens through which rivers flow and fine dwellings in gardens of perpetual abode; that is the supreme triumph. And [He will give you] something else that you love: help from Allah [against your enemies] and an imminent victory. And give these glad tidings to the believers.﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣaff 61: 10-13)*

He has only released this enemy upon His believing slave, the most beloved of creation to Him, because jihad is the most beloved act to Him. Its people are the loftiest, nearest creatures to Him. He has erected the banner of this war for His most cherished creation, namely the heart. The heart is the station of knowing Him, loving Him, serving Him, being sincere to Him, relying upon Him, and confiding in Him. For this reason, He has delegated the affairs of this war to the person, providing aid with an army of His angels that never forsakes them:

﴿ لَهُۥ مُعَقِّبَٰتٞ مِّنۢ بَيۡنِ يَدَيۡهِ وَمِنۡ خَلۡفِهِۦ يَحۡفَظُونَهُۥ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِۗ ... ١١ ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ١١)

﴿For each [person], there are angels in succession, before him and behind him, watching over him by the command of Allah…﴾ *(ar-Ra'd 13: 11)*

These angels replace one another, continuously keeping the person steadfast, commanding and encouraging the person with good, promising the gifts of Allah, providing support and saying, “Be patient. It is nothing but a moment. After this, you will find yourself resting forever…”

He has also supplied such people with another army – His revelation and His words. He has sent His Messengers and the Qur’an to them. Through these, He has fortified them with strength upon strength, reinforcements after reinforcements, and artillery along with artillery. He has further helped them by supplying them with a mind that discerns and plans for them, and with the knowledge that counsels and advises them. He has also empowered and strengthened them with faith and unwavering certainty that unveils reality. They are almost staring at what Allah (□) has promised His friends in their jihad against His enemy.

The mind plans for their army, and their knowledge assesses the affairs of the battle and gauges its events. Faith fuels their steadfastness, strength, and patience, while certainty carries them forward during the moment of truth.

Allah (□) also supplies the upholders of this war with internal and external strengths. He makes their eyes a scout, their ears an informant, their tongue a translator, and their hands and feet the supporters. He appoints His angels and the bearers of His Throne to seek forgiveness for such people and request that they be protected from sins and admitted into the gardens. He Himself assumes the task of defending them, and He mentions that these are His party and that the prosperous are the party of Allah:

﴿ ... أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزۡبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحُونَ ٢٢ ﴾ (سورة المجادلة: ٢٢)

﴿…verily, it is the party of Allah Who will be the successful ones.﴾ *(al-Mujâdilah 58: 22)*

﴿وَإِنَّ جُندَنَا لَهُمُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ ١٧٣﴾ (سورة الصافات: ١٧٣)

﴿And it is surely Our troops who will be the victors.﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 173)*

Allah teaches His slaves the nature of this war, summarizing it for them in four words:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱصۡبِرُواْ وَصَابِرُواْ وَرَابِطُواْ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ٢٠٠﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ٢٠٠)

﴿O you who believe, be steadfast and stand firm; be on the alert; and fear Allah, so that you might prosper.﴾ *(Âl ʻImrân 3: 200)*

This battle cannot be concluded without these four matters. Perseverance cannot be achieved without enduring the enemy and resisting the attempts to invade the heart. After enduring the enemy, one needs another matter: to remain stationed, safeguarding the ‘trenches’ of the heart, the eye, the ear, the tongue, the stomach, the hands, and the legs. These trenches admit the enemy behind the walls to spoil whatever they can. Remaining stationed means never leaving these openings unattended, lest the enemy finds the trench vacant and enters through it.

Look at the Companions of Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) the best of creation after the Prophets and Messengers. They were the most protected from Satan. Yet they left the place where they had been commanded to remain on the Day of Uḥud.[153] The enemy entered from it, and that infamous incident took place.

The key to these three matters and the foundation on which they stand is taqwâ (fear) of Allah. Perseverance, endurance, and remaining stationed serve no benefit without taqwâ – and taqwâ itself will not be sustained without patience.

Look now within you at the two armies meeting and forming ranks. See how this leans in your favour one time and against you another time.

The king of the disbelievers approaches with his soldiers. He finds the heart sitting in its fortress, situated upon the throne of its kingdom. His supporters fulfil his command, and his troops surround him in defence.

Satan cannot attack without first turning some soldiers against the person. He asks, “Which of the soldiers is closest to this person?”

He is told, “The self.”

He tells his supporters:

- “Take advantage of its interests. Search for what it loves and enjoys; promise it, and make it hopeful of it. Engrave the image of its love in front of it while it sleeps and is awake. When it becomes reassured by it and obsessed with it, cast the nets and hooks of desires upon it and use them to drag it towards you. Once the self betrays the heart and allies with you against it, you can take control of the trenches of the eye, ear, tongue, mouth, hands, and legs. Remain firmly stationed at these trenches, for when you enter through them into the heart, it will be killed, captured or critically injured. Never vacate these trenches or allow a battalion to enter the heart and expel you. If you are overpowered, diligently work to weaken the battalion so it does not reach the heart. Even if it happens to reach it, the heart will have already become so weak that nothing will be able to aid it whatsoever.”
- “Once you have taken over these trenches, prevent the eye from looking with reflection. Make those glances ones of admiration and distraction. If the person happens to steal a glance of reflection, spoil it with a glance of heedlessness and lust – for these are easier and more natural. Focus on the trench of the eye, for through it, you will achieve your aims.”
- “I have not corrupted the descendants of Adam with anything more effective than the glance. With a glance, I plant the seeds of lust in the heart and feed them with the water of vain wishes. I continue

promising until the person's determination strengthens. I drag the victim with the reins of lust outside the light of purity. Do not neglect this trench. Spoil it as best as possible and have the person underestimate its effect. Mention, 'What is the harm in a glance that invites you to glorify the Creator and ponder His brilliant design and beautiful images solely created for the onlooker to learn about Him? Allah did not create two eyes for you without a purpose, nor did He create this image just to veil it from sight!' If you find the person ignorant and feeble-minded, explain that this image is one of the manifestations of *al-Ḥaqq* (the Truth) through which Allah makes Himself apparent to the world. Then invite to belief in pantheism![154] If the person rejects this notion, invite to partial pantheism.[155] Accept nothing less, for, by this, the person becomes like the Christians. At that point, command the person towards chastity, religiosity, worship, and asceticism. Capture the ignorant using this image. This is the closest of my allies and the greatest of my soldiers. In fact, I am this person's soldier and supporter. Prevent anything that may thwart your plans from entering the trench of the ear. Ensure that nothing but falsehood enters, for the self enjoys it and does not find it burdensome. Choose the sweetest words to captivate the mind and blend them with what the self yearns for. Cast a word… If you find the person attentive, follow it up with another. Whenever you notice captivation with something, mention it continuously. Do not let any of the words of Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ) or the sincere advisers enter this trench. If you are overpowered, and some beneficial matter enters, prevent the person from understanding it, reflecting on it, and taking a lesson from it. Make it seem too great to achieve or crowd it with some opposing ideas. Convince the person that this matter is impossible to attain and too cumbersome to be pursued. Use other similar reasons… Or create a lack of interest in seeking it and (whisper) that one should busy oneself with what people value, consider worthy, and find fascinating; something that has more customers."[156]

- “The truth will be abandoned and truthful ones attacked by their enemies. Explain that what the people value should be preferred… Bombard the person with falsehood by making it seem light and palatable, and present the truth as something difficult (upon the self) and detested (by others).”

- “If you wish to learn this, look at their brothers (and sisters) from the human devils. Notice how they present enjoining good and forbidding evil as being intrusive. That is because it means seeking out people’s faults, subjecting oneself to unbearable hardship, making trouble between people, and so on.”

They (the human devils) claim that it is anthropomorphic[157] to follow the Sunnah and describe the Lord as He described Himself or was described by His Messenger (ﷺ). (They claim) that this likens Allah to His creation and presents Allah as fathomable. They present Allah’s highness over His creation, His establishment upon His Throne, and His distinctness from His creation as a limitation!

They claim that His descent to the lowest heaven, to ask this question:

«Is anyone asking Me so that I may grant them (their request)?» (Bukhari and Muslim)

– indicates movement and relocation. They claim that His Hand and Face are limbs and appendages. They claim that the actions He performs are never pre-planned events and that the qualities He displays are transient.

They then proceed to deny what He has described Himself with. They mislead the feeble-minded masses, making them assume that affirming the attributes stated in the Qur’an and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) entails believing these false claims. They present this denial (of His attributes) as reverence and exaltation. Most people – the feeble-minded[158] – accept a certain notion expressed in one way and reject the very same notion when it is expressed differently…

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلۡنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيّٖ عَدُوّٗا شَيَٰطِينَ ٱلۡإِنسِ وَٱلۡجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعۡضُهُمۡ إِلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ زُخۡرُفَ ٱلۡقَوۡلِ غُرُورٗاۚ ... ١١٢﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١١٢)

﴿And similarly We appointed for every Prophet enemies, devils from among humankind and jinn, whispering to one another fancy words in order to deceive…﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 112)*

He has called it ﴿fancy words﴾. However, it is false because its presenter decorates and beautifies it as much as possible and then casts it into the ear of the deceived to mislead him.

To summarize, Satan remains stationed at the trench of the ear. He only admits what is harmful and prevents anything beneficial from entering. If anything beneficial enters despite attempts to keep it out, Satan spoils it. Then he says:

- "Rise to the trench of the tongue. It is the greatest trench and the gateway to the sovereign (the heart). Involve the person in talk that will only cause harm. Keep him away from anything beneficial, such as remembering Allah (ﷻ), seeking forgiveness, reciting His Book, advising His slaves, and discussing beneficial knowledge. Target two great matters in this trench, and it does not matter which you attain. The first is spreading falsehood, for the one who spreads falsehood is one of your brethren and your greatest supporters. The second is remaining silent about the truth, for the one who remains silent is a mute brother to you, just like the first one who spreads falsehood. In fact, the second brother may be more beneficial to you. Have you not heard the saying of the advisor[159] that the one spreading falsehood is a talking devil and the one silent about the truth is a mute devil?"

- "Take all measures at this trench to ensure that the person never speaks the truth and never withholds falsehood. Beautify the spreading of falsehood by every method and incite fear of speaking the truth, using every strategy."

- “My children! Know that the trench of the tongue is what I destroyed the descendants of Adam with and what I will use to throw them on their noses into the fire of hell. How many have I killed, captured, or injured through this trench! Take this word of advice and memorize it. Appoint one of you upon the tongue of the human being who incites them to utter an (immoral) word. Appoint another upon the tongue of the listener, inciting them to express approval and interest in these statements. Prompt the former to repeat them.”

- “Help one another against the humans using every method. Enter from every door and sit, awaiting them at every turn. Have you not heard my oath that I swore to their Lord?”

﴿قَالَ فَبِمَآ أَغۡوَيۡتَنِي لَأَقۡعُدَنَّ لَهُمۡ صِرَٰطَكَ ٱلۡمُسۡتَقِيمَ ١٦ ثُمَّ لَأٓتِيَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَيۡنِ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَمِنۡ خَلۡفِهِمۡ وَعَنۡ أَيۡمَٰنِهِمۡ وَعَن شَمَآئِلِهِمۡۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكۡثَرَهُمۡ شَٰكِرِينَ ١٧﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ١٦-١٧)

﴿[Iblees] said: Because You have caused me to be misguided, I will certainly lie in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will certainly come at them from before them and from behind them, from their right and from their left. And You will find most of them ungrateful.﴾ *(al-A‘râf 7: 16-17)*

- “Have you not seen that I sit waiting for the descendants of Adam on all their paths? If they escape me from one path, they find me waiting for them on another path until I reach my aims or some of them. Even their Messenger (ﷺ) has warned them of this.” [He said to them as narrated by Sabrah ibn Abil-Fâkih:]

  «Satan sits in wait for the descendants of Adam in all their paths. He sits waiting for him on the path to Islam and says: Will you accept Islam and leave your religion and the religion of your forefathers?

But he disobeys him and accepts Islam. Then he sits waiting for him on the path to Hijrah (any migration made to please Allah), and he says: Will you emigrate and leave behind your land and sky? The one who emigrates is like a horse tethered to a peg.

But he disobeys him and emigrates. Then he sits, waiting for him, on the path to jihad, and he says: Will you fight in jihad when it costs you your life and wealth? You will fight and be killed, your wife will remarry, and your wealth will be divided.

But he disobeys him and fights in jihad.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasâ'i, Ibn Ḥibbân, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with a reliable chain of narration)

- "Sit waiting for them on every path to good. When any of them wish to donate, wait for them en route to donating and ask them, 'Will you spend your money, remain like these beggars, and become just like them?' Have you not heard that I inspired one person who was asked by another for charity to say, 'This is our money. If I give it to you, we will become like you.'"
- "Sit waiting for them on the path to Hajj and say, 'The road is difficult and frightening, and its travellers may lose their life and wealth.' Likewise, sit on every path of good, chasing them away from it by reminding them of its dangers and difficulties. Sit waiting for them on the path towards sins. Beautify them in the eyes of the descendants of Adam and decorate them in their hearts. Let your greatest aid in that be women; through them, deviate the humans, for how excellent an ally to you they are!"
- "Station yourselves upon the trenches of the hands and feet. Prevent them from touching or ever walking towards what will harm you… Know that your greatest aid in securing these trenches is allying with the carnal self. Aid it and seek aid from it. Reinforce it and seek reinforcement from it. Combat together against the 'self at peace' and

work ardently to break it and inhibit its strength. The only means to this is by obstructing its nourishment from reaching it."

- "Once the heart's vitality has been drained, the carnal self has been nourished, and its allies are submissive to you, oust the heart from its fortress and isolate it from its kingdom. Replace it with the carnal self, for it will command whatever you desire. Never bring about anything you dislike, and it will not disagree with anything you suggest. In fact, it will hasten to perform your suggestions."
- "If you ever feel the heart contending for its kingdom and seeking security, bond it and the carnal self in marriage. Decorate and beautify it until the carnal self is perceived as the most gorgeous bride imaginable. Say to it, 'Taste this union and the enjoyment of this bride… just as you tasted the battle and experienced the stabs and strikes!' Compare the sweetness of this peace to the sourness of that war. Let the battle conclude. It is not a day (of combat) that will pass; it is a war that persists until death, and your strength cannot bear an unending battle."
- "Also, my children, seek help with two great armies that will never allow your defeat. The first is the army of heedlessness. Using every means, make the human heart heedless of Allah and the hereafter. You possess nothing more effective for acquiring your aims than that. When the heart becomes heedless of Allah, you become fully capable of misleading it. The second is the army of desires. Decorate the desires in their hearts and beautify them in their eyes. Assault them with these two armies, for nothing is more effective against the descendants of Adam than these. Use desires to induce heedlessness and use heedlessness to arouse desires. Join with the heedless and unleash them upon the alert one. One cannot defeat five since with each of the two heedless individuals is a devil, which amounts to four, in addition to the devil of this alert person who is their ally."

- “Suppose you discover that a group has gathered for what harms you, such as remembering Allah or studying His commands and prohibitions, and you are incapable of separating them. In that case, seek aid against them using their brethren. Bring idle humans near them and cause disruptions using them.”

- “Prepare for each case what suits it. Enter into every human being through their likes and desires. Aid each person in that endeavour and be supporters in attaining it. Allah has commanded them to persevere, endure, and remain in their trenches against you. You must also persevere, endure, and remain in your trenches against them. Wait there for your opportunities whenever they are tempted or angered. You will not capture the descendants of Adam as perfectly as you will capture them during these two conditions.”

- “Some of them are weak when faced with desires, but anger has less command over them, so take the path of desires and ignore the path of anger. Even though anger has greater control over others, do not ignore the path of desires or abandon its trench. Those who cannot restrain themselves when angry can surely not restrain themselves when angered while pursuing their desires. Fuse their anger and desire; entice them with their desires when they are angry, and entice them to become angry when they seek their desires.”

- “Know that you have no weapon against the descendants of Adam more powerful than these two. Nothing expelled the parents from paradise but desire, and nothing instilled enmity between their offspring but anger. Using these weapons, I severed their relationships and spilt their blood. Through anger and desire, Adam’s first son killed his brother.”[160]

- “Know that anger is a burning coal in the heart of the descendants of Adam and desire is a fire that rages in their hearts. This fire is only extinguished by water, prayer, *dhikr* (remembrance) of Allah, and takbeer.[161] Do not permit the descendants of Adam to come near

ablution or prayer when they are angry and their desires are aroused. These will extinguish the fire of anger and desire. This is how their Prophet (ﷺ) commanded them."

«Anger is a (burning) coal in the heart of the descendants of Adam. Have you not seen how their eyes redden and their jugular veins flare? Let whoever feels this perform ablution.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, al-Bayhaqi, al-Ḥâkim, aṭ-Ṭayâlisi, ʻAbdur-Razzâq, and al-Ḥumaydi with a mursal chain of narration)[162]

"He also said to them [according to a hadith narrated by ʻAṭiyah as-Saʻdi]:"

«It is water that extinguishes fire.» (Part of a hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood, Aḥmad, Bukhari [in *at-Târeekh al-Kabeer*], al-Baghawi, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni; its chain contains two unknown narrators)

- "Allah has entrusted them to seek strength against you through patience and prayer, so barricade them from it and cause them to forget it. Concurrently, seek strength against them through desire, anger, and the most destructive of your weapons against them: heedlessness and following desires (together)."
- "Note that their greatest weapons against you and their most impregnable fortresses are the dhikr of Allah and the defiance of their desires. If you see people defying their desires, flee from their shadows and do not dare to get close to them."

To summarize, sins and disobedience are weapons that people supply their enemies with – weapons by which they aid the enemies against themselves. The enemies then fight them with their own weapons, making these people allies to the enemy against themselves. This is the epitome of ignorance.

*Alas, the enemies can never harm the ignorant,*
*As fatally as the ignorant can harm themselves.*

How astonishing that one's arduous striving ends up in humiliation instead of honour. One strives to seek prosperity yet deprives oneself of the greatest, most noble share (in the hereafter). One exhausts one's efforts trying to elevate oneself yet ends up debasing and spoiling oneself.

One of the salaf mentions in his sermon:

> Perhaps one disgraces oneself while claiming to honour oneself, humiliates oneself while claiming to dignify oneself, debases oneself while claiming to respect oneself, and ruins oneself while claiming to safeguard one's rights. It is sufficient ignorance to be with one's enemy against oneself, administering more damage with one's own acts than one's enemy ever could – and Allah is the source of strength.

## -51-

One of its punishments is that sin causes one to forget oneself. Once one forgets oneself, one neglects, corrupts, and destroys oneself.

If someone asks, "How can one forget oneself? If one forgets oneself, what can one possibly remember? What does it mean to forget oneself?"

The reply is that yes, one can forget oneself completely:

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾

(سورة الحشر: ١٩)

﴿Do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He caused them to forget themselves. It is they who are the evildoers.﴾ *(al-Ḥashr 59: 19)*

﴿ ... نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ ۚ ... ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة التوبة: ٦٧)

﴿…They have forgotten Allah, so He has forgotten them…﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 67)*

Allah punishes those who forget Him with two punishments:

- He forgets them.
- He causes them to forget themselves.

When the Exalted 'forgets' His slaves, He turns away from them, neglects them, and leaves them to ruin.[163] Surely, doom is nearer to such individuals than their own hands and mouth. When He causes them to ﴿forget themselves﴾, He makes them forget their lofty share (in the hereafter), the avenues to their happiness and success, and the fulfilment of their potential. He makes them forget all that so it does not even cross their minds. They neither remember it nor do they invest their strength in aspiration for it. It does not even occur to them to make it their aim.

He (Allah) even makes them forget their faults and flaws so that they do not even think of removing or rectifying them. He makes them forget the diseases of their heart so that they never think of treating them, despite their welfare being threatened by them. You find them plagued with the most critical disease yet totally oblivious to the disease and the cure. This is truly one of the greatest punishments.

Who is punished more severely than one who neglects and ruins oneself? Such a person forgets one's welfare and disease and its cure. He loses sight of the road to joy, prosperity, and an unending life in permanent ecstasy.

It becomes clear to whoever reflects on this point that most of the creation has forgotten themselves. They have forfeited their share from Allah and sold it for a measly price with which they have been cheated. This will only become clear to them at death and crystal clear on the Day of *Taghâbun*.[164] This is when these (unfortunate) people will realize that they were cheated in the transaction they made for themselves in the worldly life and the investment they made for their hereafter – for everyone invests in this world for their hereafter.

The losers who assume that they have profited and succeeded are those who purchased the worldly life and a share of its enjoyment in exchange for the hereafter and their share in it. They exhausted themselves seeking their pleasures in the worldly life, enjoyed them, were comforted by them, and strove to acquire them. In effect, they sold one and purchased another. They sold the deferred for the immediate, the credit for the cash, and the absent for the present. Then they claimed that this was prudent discretion.

Others may say, "Take what you see and ignore what you heard about." They say to themselves, "How can I sell the present, observed commodities of this world for the absent, promised goods of another world?" This is further backed by the weakness of faith, strong worldly desires, love for the immediate, and imitation of their species. Most of the creation is involved in this loss-filled trade whose people Allah (□) describes:

﴿ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٨٦)

﴿These are the people who buy the life of this world at the cost of the hereafter; their penalty will not be alleviated nor will they be helped.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 86)*

﴿ ... فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَٰرَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٦)

﴿…but their trade brings no profit and they are not guided.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 16)*

When the Day of Taghâbun comes, they will realize how they were cheated in this trade. This realization kills an individual with regret.

The winners who profited sold the perishable for the permanent, the lowly for the precious, and the worthless for the grand. They declared, "What value does this world have, from its beginning to its end? How could

we sell our share with Allah (□) and the abode of the hereafter in exchange for it? How can it be sold when a person attains nothing from this world during its short lifespan but the equivalent of a dream during a short nap?" This can never be comparable to the permanent abode:

﴿وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ كَأَن لَّمْ يَلْبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّهَارِ يَتَعَارَفُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ ... ﴿٤٥﴾﴾ (سورة يونس: ٤٥)

﴿On the Day when He will gather them together, as if they had not remained [in this world] for longer than an hour of a day, they will recognize one another…﴾ *(Yoonus 10: 45)*

﴿يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَىٰهَا ﴿٤٢﴾ فِيمَ أَنتَ مِن ذِكْرَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٤﴾ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرُ مَن يَخْشَىٰهَا ﴿٤٥﴾ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٤٦﴾﴾ (سورة النازعات: ٤٢-٤٦)

﴿They ask you about the Hour: When will it arrive? How could you possibly know that? Its knowledge rests with your Lord alone. You are but a warner for those who fear it. On the Day they see it, it will be as if they had remained [in this world] no more than an afternoon [of a day] or the morning thereof.﴾ *(an-Nâzi'ât 79: 42-46)*

﴿... كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍۭ بَلَٰغٌ ... ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأحقاف: ٣٥)

﴿...On the Day when they see the punishment of which they were warned, it will be as if they had not remained [in this world] for longer than an hour of a day. This [Qur'an] is sufficient reminder…﴾ *(al-Aḥqâf 46: 35)*

﴿قَٰلَ كَمۡ لَبِثۡتُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ١١٢ قَالُواْ لَبِثۡنَا يَوۡمًا أَوۡ بَعۡضَ يَوۡمٖ فَسۡـَٔلِ ٱلۡعَآدِّينَ ١١٣ قَٰلَ إِن لَّبِثۡتُمۡ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗاۖ لَّوۡ أَنَّكُمۡ كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ١١٤﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ١١٢-١١٤)

﴿Allah will say: How many years did you remain on earth? They will say: We remained there for a day, or part of a day. But ask those who keep count. Allah will say: You only remained there for a short while, if you had but known.﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 112-114)*

﴿يَوۡمَ يُنفَخُ فِي ٱلصُّورِۚ وَنَحۡشُرُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ يَوۡمَئِذٖ زُرۡقٗا ١٠٢ يَتَخَٰفَتُونَ بَيۡنَهُمۡ إِن لَّبِثۡتُمۡ إِلَّا عَشۡرٗا ١٠٣ نَّحۡنُ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذۡ يَقُولُ أَمۡثَلُهُمۡ طَرِيقَةً إِن لَّبِثۡتُمۡ إِلَّا يَوۡمٗا ١٠٤﴾ (سورة طه: ١٠٢-١٠٤)

﴿The Day when the Trumpet will be blown; on that Day the evildoers will be gathered together, their eyes blind. They will whisper to one another: You stayed only for ten [days in the world]. We know best what they will say, but the most perceptive of them will say: You stayed only one day.﴾ *(Ṭâ Hâ 20: 102-104)*

This is the reality of the worldly life upon arriving at the Day of Resurrection. They realized just how little their stay in it was and that their true abode was different from that – it was the permanent abode. They understood that one of the greatest scams is to sell the permanent abode for the perishing one.

For this reason, the winners traded like the wise and were not deceived by the trade of the foolish. As a result, they encountered the profit of their trade on the Day of Taghâbun and realized the value of what they had bought. Everyone is a seller, buyer, and trader in this worldly life.

Abu Mâlik al-Ash'ari reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«All people set out in the morning and sell themselves; they either liberate or destroy themselves.» (Muslim)

﴿۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشۡتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمۡ وَأَمۡوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلۡجَنَّةَۚ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقۡتُلُونَ وَيُقۡتَلُونَۖ وَعۡدًا عَلَيۡهِ حَقّٗا فِي ٱلتَّوۡرَىٰةِ وَٱلۡإِنجِيلِ وَٱلۡقُرۡءَانِۚ وَمَنۡ أَوۡفَىٰ بِعَهۡدِهِۦ مِنَ ٱللَّهِۚ فَٱسۡتَبۡشِرُواْ بِبَيۡعِكُمُ ٱلَّذِي بَايَعۡتُم بِهِۦۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ١١١﴾ (سورة التوبة: ١١١)

﴿Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their wealth, in return for which paradise will be theirs; they fight in His cause, and they slay and are slain. It is a true promise, given by Him in the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an, and who is more faithful to His promise than Allah? Rejoice, then, in the bargain you have made; that is the supreme triumph.﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 111)*

This is the first price for this trade – so fulfil the transaction, O bankrupt person.

O you who are incapable of this price, there is another price (in the next verse) – so if you are of that trade, make this your payment:

﴿ٱلتَّٰٓئِبُونَ ٱلۡعَٰبِدُونَ ٱلۡحَٰمِدُونَ ٱلسَّٰٓئِحُونَ ٱلرَّٰكِعُونَ ٱلسَّٰجِدُونَ ٱلۡأٓمِرُونَ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَٱلنَّاهُونَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ وَٱلۡحَٰفِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ ٱللَّهِۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ١١٢﴾ (سورة التوبة: ١١٢)

﴿[Those believers] are the ones who repent to Allah, worship Him, praise Him, fast, bow and prostrate, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and observe the limits set by Allah. So give glad tidings to the believers.﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 112)*

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ هَلۡ أَدُلُّكُمۡ عَلَىٰ تِجَٰرَةٖ تُنجِيكُم مِّنۡ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٖ ١٠ تُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُجَٰهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمۡوَٰلِكُمۡ وَأَنفُسِكُمۡۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ١١ ﴾ (سورة الصف: ١٠-١١)

﴿O you who believe, shall I tell you about a deal that will save you from a painful punishment? Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and strive and fight, offering your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah. That is better for you, if only you knew.﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣaff 61: 10-11)*

To summarize, sins cause people to forget their share of this lucrative trade, which preoccupies them with the loss-filled trade. This is sufficient punishment – and Allah is the source of strength.

## -52-

Another punishment is that sin removes the present blessings and obstructs the incoming blessings. Obedience to Allah is the most effective and the only way to acquire and retain His blessings.

Know that Allah (□) has determined for all things a means and an inhibitor; the means evoke it, and the inhibitor hinders it from materializing. He has determined that obeying Him evokes His blessings and disobeying Him inhibits them. When Allah wants to safeguard a blessing for His slave, He inspires the person to protect it and obey Him with it. When He wishes to remove (the blessing), He leaves the person to use it to sin against Him.

It is remarkable how individuals know this by seeing it in themselves and others. They know it by hearing about those whose blessings have been removed by Allah due to their sins. Yet they persist in disobeying Allah. It is as if some individuals feel like an exception, privileged above being subjected to this. It is as if this does not apply to them but to the rest of creation only.

What ignorance exceeds this? What injustice against oneself is superior to this? The decree ultimately belongs to Allah, the Most High, the Most Grand.

## -53-

Punishments for sin also include distancing individuals from their ally – the angel appointed to the person – the most beneficial creature to them and their sincerest advisor. Their prosperity is contingent upon remaining near to him. Instead, sin brings their enemy, Satan, close. He is most deceitful to them and the most dangerous cohort. When people disobey Allah, the angel flees from them to the extent of that sin.

In the event of even a single lie, this angel becomes a great distance away, as the narration by Ibn ‘Umar mentioned:

«When the slave lies, the angel keeps a mile away due to its stench.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Abu Nu‘aym, Ibn Ḥibbân, and Ibn ‘Adiy with a weak chain of narration)

If this distance from the angel resulted from one lie, how far does the angel keep away from what is greater and more offensive?

One of the salaf said, “When a man mounts another man, the earth complains to Allah and the angels flee to their Lord complaining about the obscenity they have seen.”

Another among the salaf said:

> When a slave awakens, an angel and a devil race to that person. If the person remembers Allah, making takbeer, *taḥmeed* [saying *alḥamdulillâh* – all praise is for Allah] and *tahleel* [saying *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*], the angel expels the devil and safeguards the person. If anyone

begins with other than that, the angel departs and the devil assumes control.

The angel continues drawing near to the slave until he secures a positive influence over the person. Thus the angels become allies in the person's life, death, and resurrection:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ... ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة فُصِّلَت: ٣٠-٣١)

﴿Verily, those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast, to them the angels will come down [at the time of death, saying]: Fear not, nor grieve; but receive the glad tidings of paradise which you were promised. We have been your close friends in the life of this world and [will remain so] in the hereafter…﴾ *(Fuṣṣilat 41: 30-31)*

If the angel becomes an ally with someone, that person has allied with the sincerest, purest, and most beneficial creatures. They teach and keep the person firm, and provide strength and assistance:

﴿إِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَنِّى مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ ... ﴿١٢﴾﴾ (سورة الأنفال: ١٢)

﴿[Remember] when your Lord inspired the angels [saying]: Verily, I am with you, so support those who believe…﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 12)*

The angel says to the person at death: «I am to give you glad tidings of something that will please you.»[165]

The angel strengthens the person with a firm statement when they need it the most in this worldly life, at death, and in the grave when questioned.

No one is more beneficial to individuals than the angel accompanying each person. He is the guardian while one is awake or asleep, during life, at death, and in the grave. He keeps the person company and befriends them during loneliness, speaks to the person in private, and defends, combats, and provides aid against the enemy. He brings glad tidings and encourages the person to believe in the truth:

«The angel has an assembly in the heart of a human, and the devil has an assembly. The assembly of the angel denotes good and (urges) belief in the promise (of Allah), but the assembly of the devil denotes evil and (urges) denial of the truth.» (Recorded by an-Nasâ'i, Ibn Ḥibbân, at-Tirmidhi, aṭ-Ṭabari, Abu Ya'lâ, and al-Bayhaqi with weak, mawqoof chains that strengthen one another)

If the angel draws nearer to the slave, he inspires the person to speak, dictating proper words (to utter). Similarly, if the angel goes further away and the devil draws nearer to the slave, the devil inspires the person to speak, dictating falsehood and obscenity. Ultimately, you find an angel inspiring the person at one time and a devil inspiring the person at another.

It came in a report, "Tranquillity inspires 'Umar to speak wisely."[166]

Someone would hear a righteous word from a righteous person and remark, "The angel dictated that to you, and you uttered it." Someone would hear its opposite and remark, "The devil inspired you, and you uttered it." This is because the angel casts the truth into the heart and makes the tongue utter it. In contrast, the devil casts falsehood into the heart and makes the tongue utter it.

One of the punishments for sin is that it keeps the person's guardian away, even though the person's success requires that the guardian remains a close ally. It also brings the person's enemy close, even though their destruction lies in the enemy becoming a close ally. The angel fends for someone and responds in their place when the foolish curse or insult the person:

«Two men were disputing in front of the Prophet (ﷺ), and one began to insult the other, yet he remained silent. Then one responded with a word in retaliation against his companion, so the Prophet (ﷺ) stood up to leave.

He asked: O Messenger of Allah! When I responded to what he said, why did you get up?

He replied: Initially, the angel was defending you. When you responded to him, the devil came, and I refuse to sit with Satan.» (This was graded authentic by al-'Ajlooni)

A hadith narrated by Abu ad-Dardâ' mentioned:

«When a Muslim supplicates for someone in the person's absence, the angel says *âmeen* (O Allah, accept our invocation).

He also says: May you have the same.» (Muslim)

When a person completes reciting Soorat al-Fâtiḥah, the angel says âmeen to the supplication. (Bukhari and Muslim)

When a believing monotheist who follows the path of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) commits a sin, the bearers of the Throne and those around it seek forgiveness for that person.[167]

When someone performs ablution before sleeping, an angel spends the night in the person's garment[168] and seeks forgiveness for them whenever they awaken at night.

Such is the believer's angel. He protects, teaches, strengthens, motivates, and fights in defence of the person. It is unbefitting to mistreat this companion, annoy him, and chase him away. He is the person's guest and neighbour. If honouring the human guest and being kind to the neighbour is one of the requirements of faith, what about honouring the noblest guest and the purest neighbour? When the person annoys the angel with all types of sins, injustices, and obscenities, the angel supplicates to his Lord against the person, "May Allah not reward you with good." He also

supplicates for the person when one honours him with righteous acts and kindness.

One of the Companions said, “With you are those who do not leave you, so have some modesty in front of them and honour them.”

Only the vilest person has no modesty in front of those who are noble and esteemed, showing them no respect or due regard:

﴿وَإِنَّ عَلَيۡكُمۡ لَحَٰفِظِينَ ١٠ كِرَامٗا كَٰتِبِينَ ١١ يَعۡلَمُونَ مَا تَفۡعَلُونَ ١٢﴾ (سورة الانفطار: ١٠-١٢)

﴿While indeed there are watchers appointed over honourable scribes, who know all that you do.﴾ *(al-Infiṭâr 82: 10-12)*

In other words, show some modesty before these noble recorders. Honour and respect them, and do not let them see you doing anything that would embarrass you.

The angels are distressed by whatever distresses the descendants of Adam. If the descendants of Adam are upset by witnessing something obscene and sinful (even if they commit the same sin), imagine the indignation of the noble recording angels. Allah is the source of strength.

## -54-

Finally, a punishment for sin is that it evokes the elements of doom against the slave in this worldly life and the hereafter. Sins are diseases that inevitably kill when they become firmly established. The body cannot be healthy without nutrition to preserve its strength, detoxification to remove the poisons that – when ignored – destroy it, and immunity to guard against the infiltration of harmful elements. Similarly, the heart cannot live without:

- The nutrition of faith and good deeds to preserve its strength;

- Detoxification of sincere repentance to remove evil from it; and
- The immunity to safeguard its health and repel its opposite (namely, the practice of anything unhealthy).

Taqwâ is a term inclusive of these three matters. Whenever one is missing, taqwâ is missing in the same proportion.

Know that sins are the opposite of these three matters. They evoke harmful elements (that do not nourish), prevent the detoxification of sincere repentance, and make one vulnerable by offsetting immunity.

Consider an ill body in which diseases and harmful elements have accumulated. Yet, it does not flush out the toxins or protect itself. How can it be healthy and survive?

*Your body – you guarded it with an immunity,*
*Fearing a temporary danger may transpire.*
*It would have been more prudent to protect yourself,*
*From sins – out of fear of the blazing fire.*

If one guards one's strength by upholding the commands, seeks immunity by avoiding the prohibitions, and removes poisons with sincere repentance, one has attained all good and escaped all evil – and Allah is the source of strength.

# Sins Cause Legislative Punishments

If these punishments do not deter you or affect your heart, remember Allah and His Messenger's legislative punishments for various crimes.

Cutting off a hand is legislated for stealing three dirhams. Cutting off a hand and leg is legislated for the highway robber who robs civilians. Lacerating with a whip, the skin of those who slander the innocent or drink wine is also legislated.

A gruesome killing by stoning is legislated for the male genital organ penetrating an unlawful vaginal opening. This punishment is lightened for someone unblessed with marriage to a hundred lashes and a year's exile from one's land. Decapitation is legislated for fornicating with a *maḥram*[169], abandoning the prescribed prayers, or uttering words of disbelief.[170] The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded killing a man who fornicates with another man and the latter with him. Likewise, he commanded killing the one who fornicates with an animal and the animal fornicated with.

The Prophet (ﷺ) nearly burned down the homes of those who neglected to pray in congregation.[171] This is along with other punishments Allah (□) has set for crimes. From His wisdom, Allah has chosen them

according to what elicits these crimes and what would be an effective deterrent.

If a crime is naturally detestable to human nature, the Legislator (Allah) deems it unlawful and applies *ta'zeer* to it. However, no *ḥadd* punishment ensues. These crimes include eating dung, drinking blood, and eating carrion.[172]

If human nature invites others towards a crime, the Legislator has set a punishment in proportion to its harm and the inborn desire for it. Since the impulse to fornicate is one of the greatest, its maximum punishment is to be killed horrifically. Its basic punishment is the highest form of lashing and banishment. Likewise, because the crime of homosexuality consists of both, the legislative punishment is to have the offender killed in all cases. Similarly, because the impulse to steal is strong and its harm is great, the hand is cut off for it.

Reflect upon His wisdom… He legislates ruining the limb with which the person committed the crime, just as He legislates ruining the highway robber's hand and leg used in a robbery. Yet He does not ruin the tongue that utters a slander, for the harm in cutting it far surpasses the harm of this crime. He suffices with punishing the entire body with flogging.

If someone asks, "Should He not ruin the fornicator's private part which performed the crime?"

The response is negative for several reasons:

1. Its harm surpasses the crime's harm, for it involves discontinuing his progeny and risking his life.
2. The private part is a concealed organ. Cutting it off, as opposed to cutting off the hand, does not achieve the aim of the legislative punishment, which is to deter other criminals like him.

3. Unlike the private part, cutting off the hand leaves another hand to compensate for it.
4. The pleasure of fornicating is enjoyed by the entire body, making it better that the punishment be felt by the whole body too. This is superior to restricting it to a particular organ.

The Legislator's punishments have come in the most perfect, logical forms, which best consider the interests (of all).

In short, sins either incur legislative or universal punishments. Allah may combine both for a person or remove them from the penitent doer of good.

# Punishments Are Legislative and Universal

There are two types of punishments for sins: legislative and universal. When the legislative punishment is established, it rescinds or lightens the universal punishment. The Master (Allah) hardly combines both punishments for someone unless the first is insufficient to remove the sin or disease.

If legislative punishments are not executed, they (all) become universal and perhaps more severe than the former. It is plausible that they may be less severe, but they will affect everyone. Legislative punishments are specific. Our Lord, the Blessed and High, only punishes by His law those who participate in the crime directly.

Universal punishment occurs at large and specifically. When the sin is hidden, it harms its doer specifically. On the other hand, when sin is publicized, it harms everyone. When people see evil and (indirectly) participate by not denouncing it, Allah soon afflicts them collectively with His punishment.

It was previously mentioned that Allah (□) set legislative punishments in proportion to the harm caused by the sin and the inborn desire for it.

Allah (ﷻ) has made them of three types: killing, cutting, and whipping. He has legislated death for disbelief and what is close to it, like fornication and homosexuality, for these corrupt the religion, lineage, and human nature.

Imam Aḥmad mentions, “Apart from murder, I do not know of any sin greater than fornication.” His proof was the following hadith:

«‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood asked: O Messenger of Allah! Which sin is the greatest?

He replied: To ascribe a rival to Allah since He created you.

He asked: Then what?

He replied: To kill your child, fearing there will not be enough food for the family.

He asked: Then what?

He replied: To fornicate with your neighbour’s wife.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Allah (ﷻ) reveals in confirmation of this:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدۡعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقۡتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفۡسَ ٱلَّتِي حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا يَزۡنُونَۚ ... ٦٨﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦٨)

﴿Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah; and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of justice; and who do not commit fornication or adultery…﴾ *(al-Furqân 25: 68)*

The Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned the worst of each type in answer to the question. Since ‘Abdullâh asked about the greatest sin, he answered with the greatest types (of sin) and the greatest of each type:

1. The greatest type of polytheism is a person ascribing an equal to Allah.

2. The greatest type of murder is killing one's child, fearing there will not be enough to eat and drink.[173]

3. The greatest type of fornication is committing adultery with the neighbour's wife, for the evil of fornication increases in proportion to the number of sanctities it violates.

Committing adultery with a woman with a husband is greater in sin and punishment than fornicating with an unmarried woman. The former violates the husband's sanctity and affects his ancestry. An individual (child) not his may be attributed to him, and he may suffer other harm. Hence it is greater sin and crime than fornication with an unmarried woman.

If the woman's husband was the neighbour of this individual, this adds to being a bad neighbour and harming one's neighbour in the worst way.

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«A person who harms his neighbour does not enter paradise.» (Muslim)

Fornication with the neighbour's wife is one of the greatest harms. Fornication with a hundred unmarried women is less serious in Allah's sight than adultery with the neighbour's wife.

If this neighbour happens to be a brother or a relative, the sin of severing ties of kinship is also added to it. If this neighbour is absent in obedience to Allah for prayer, jihad or seeking knowledge, the sin is further increased. The one who commits adultery with the wife of someone fighting in Allah's way will be made to stand on the Day of Resurrection while he (the husband) is told, "Take from his good deeds what you wish." It was reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The sanctity of the wives of those who travel to fight in Allah's path is like the sanctity of their mothers for those who sit at home (that is, do not go out for jihad). Anyone who stays behind looking after the family of a *mujâhid*

and betrays his trust will be made to stand on the Day of Judgement before the mujâhid, who will take away from his meritorious deeds whatever he likes. So what do you think?» (Muslim)

In other words, do you presume that he (the wronged husband) will leave (the offender) a single good deed after being offered whatever he wishes? That is especially bearing in mind the severe need for every good deed. Remember that in this world, even parents demand debt repayment from their offspring, spouses demand payment from their spouses, and friends demand from their friends.

Were this neighbour's wife a relative of his, this would also be a form of severing relations with her which further compounds the crime. If the adulterer himself were married, the sin would then be even greater. If he is elderly, this would be yet greater in sin, and he would be one of the three that Allah will neither purify nor speak to on the Day of Resurrection. For such people is a painful torment.

Abu Hurayrah (□) reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«There are three (types of) people to whom Allah will not speak on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, nor look at them, and they will have a painful punishment. These are: an aged man who commits adultery (illicit sexual act), a ruler who lies, and a proud poor person.» (Muslim)

The sin would be further augmented if it coincided with a sacred month, land, or time, like prayer times or when supplications are answered.

On this basis, consider the harms of sin and their augmented levels of transgression and punishment. Allah is the source of strength.

Allah (□) has legislated cutting off (the hand) for stealing wealth because the thief cannot be wholly cautioned against. Thieves steal secretly and break into homes. They do not enter through the doors. They come like a snake or cat, which seemingly enters from nowhere. The harm of stealing

does not deserve killing, and whipping is not a sufficient deterrent. So the best method to inhibit its harm is by severing the limb used in the crime.

Allah (□) legislated flogging for corrupting the mind (with wine) and for tarnishing the honour (of other people) by slander.

His legislated punishments revolve around these three, just as the expiations are of three types: freeing a slave (which is the highest form), feeding (others), and fasting.

He has made sins of three types.

The first type incurs just legislative punishment. There is no expiation required.

The second type does not incur a legislative punishment, but expiation is required. Examples are:

- Intercourse during the daytime in Ramadan or while in *iḥrâm*[174] or after pronouncing *dhihâr*;[175]
- (Accidental) manslaughter;
- Breaking an oath, and others.

The third type does not incur legislative punishment or expiation. It is of two kinds:

1. Something that is naturally detested, such as eating faeces, drinking urine, and drinking blood.
2. Something less serious than what incurs legislative punishment, such as looking, kissing, touching, talking, stealing a little money, and others.

Allah (□) has legislated expiation for three types (of sin):

1. **The first type** is fundamentally lawful, but becomes unlawful if practised during an unlawful time, like intercourse during iḥrâm,

fasting, menses, or postpartum bleeding. (This differs from anal intercourse. Those jurists who have likened it to intercourse during menses are mistaken, for it was not lawful at any point in time. It is the equivalent of sodomy and drinking intoxicants.)

2. **The second type** is where one effectively makes a contract with Allah through vowing, swearing by Him, or deeming something unlawful (upon oneself) for Him, then (later) wishing to annul it. Allah (□) has legislated expiation for its annulment, called 'dissolution'. This expiation does not entail violating the (divine) name via the annulment, as some jurists presume, because the annulment may be obligatory, recommended, or permissible. The expiation simply dissolves what the person vowed or swore to do.

3. **The third type** is a loss (incurred by others) for which compensation is needed, like the expiation for manslaughter, even though no sin has occurred.

The expiation for accidentally killing game (during iḥrâm) serves as reparation. The first type (of expiation) is a deterrent, while the second type dissolves what the contract had forbidden.

Can ta'zeer and expiation coexist for a sin that does not require legislative punishment? There are two views on this.

An example of this is intercourse during iḥrâm, fasting, or menses. After stipulating the expiation, some believe that a discretionary punishment is also mandatory as compensation for the sanctity violated by the crime. Others believe that no discretionary punishment is required and expiation is sufficient. They consider it a reparation that amends (the crime).

# Universal Punishments Are Spiritual and Physical

There are two types of universal punishments: one that affects the heart and soul, and the other that affects the body and wealth.

Those affecting the heart are of two kinds:

- Actual physical pain that afflicts the heart.
- An interruption of the elements that its life and well-being require. Once these elements have been removed, their opposites begin surfacing.

Punishments for the heart are the more severe of the two types. They are the starting point for bodily punishments. These punishments increase and strengthen until they spread through the body just as physical pain spreads to the heart. Once the soul leaves the body, this judgement becomes attached to the soul, and the heart's punishment becomes apparent and obvious. This is known as the punishment of the grave. Its relation to the *barzakh* is like the relation between bodily punishments and this world.[176]

# Physical Punishments Are in This World and the Hereafter

Punishments affecting the body are of two kinds: one in this world and the other in the hereafter. Their strength and continuity depend on the degree of evil for which they were administered. The only evil in this world or the hereafter comes from sins and their punishments.

Evil originates from two matters: the evil of the soul and the evil of actions. ‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) would seek refuge from these in his sermon:

«…and We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of our soul and the evil of our actions.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, al-Bayhaqi, Abu Ya‘lâ, and Ibn Mâjah with an authentic chain of narration)[177]

The evil of actions arises from the evil of the soul. This indicates that the origin of all evil is the evil of the soul and the evil of actions is its fruit, which stems from it.

There has been a debate regarding the Prophet’s words: «and the evil of our actions».

Does this refer to evil actions? According to some, his words here are describing the actions themselves as evil. Others understood this as the negative consequences of the actions, meaning their punishments that harm us.

What supports this (second) view is that it makes his (the Prophet's) supplication for refuge inclusive of evil in its entirety. That is because the evil of the soul leads to evil actions, which in turn necessitate evil punishments. He alludes to evil actions by mentioning the evil of the souls which commit them. Thus, there is no reason to mention evil actions since he has mentioned their origin. He then mentions the ultimate end of evil, which is the painful consequence which harms a person as a punishment for their actions. Therefore, this supplication of refuge accounts for the origin of the evil (the soul), what stems from it (the actions), and the result necessitated by it (the punishment).

One of the supplications of the angels for the believers is:

﴿ وَقِهِمُ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِۚ وَمَن تَقِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ يَوۡمَئِذٖ فَقَدۡ رَحِمۡتَهُۥۚ ... ٩ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٩)

﴿And protect them from the evil consequences [of their sins], for whomever You protect from evil consequences on that Day, You will indeed have bestowed mercy upon him…﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 9)*

This entails their seeking protection from evil actions as well as from the painful punishments they inflict upon the doer of those actions. After all, if Allah (□) protects them from evil actions, He thereby shields them from its awful consequences. His statement ﴿evil consequences﴾ therefore refers to the punishments for these acts which a person should seek being protected from on that Day.

Some have argued that the angels already asked Him (in the verse prior) to protect (people) from the punishment of hellfire, which is the

consequence of evil deeds. This (according to this group) proves that the evil they requested protection from was evil actions themselves, and that the angels were echoing what the Prophet (ﷺ) also sought protection from. This (to them) is not disproven by His words ﴿that Day﴾, since what they are seeking is protection from those actions – which are in fact evil – on that Day.

It is said that there are two types of protection from sins:

1. Being protected from committing them by receiving the grace to not fall into them in the first place.
2. Being protected from their consequences through forgiveness so that one is not punished for them.

This verse includes a request for both forms of protection, and its grammatical composition attaches the setting (﴿that Day﴾) to the (latter) conditional clause, not to the (initial) clause of the request.

Reflect on how these verses praise the angels due to their faith, righteous deeds, and kindness to the believers by seeking forgiveness for them.[178]

Notice how the angels sought nearness to Allah by complimenting His expansive knowledge and mercy before seeking His forgiveness. His vast knowledge encompasses the (servants') sins, their reasons, and people's inability to refrain from sin. His vast knowledge also encompasses their enemy's attack, (impure) souls, desires and natures, and worldly allure and glamour. He knows about them from when He first fashioned them from the earth and they were still foetuses in their mothers' wombs. He knows they will inevitably disobey Him, and He loves to pardon and forgive. There are also other aspects of His vast knowledge that none encompasses but He.

His vast mercy entails that none of the believers – the monotheists He loves – will be doomed. His expansive mercy does not exclude anyone

except the utterly wretched. None is more wretched than someone who does not receive His mercy, as His mercy is wider than all things.

The angels asked Him to forgive those who had repented and followed His way, the straight path leading to Him: knowing, loving, and obeying Him. They (the sinners) had repented from what He hates and followed His path, which He loves. The angels also asked Him to protect them from the punishment of hellfire. They implored Him to admit them, along with the believers, their parents, children, and spouses, into the gardens of Eden, which He had promised them.

Even though He never breaks a promise, His promise to them was connected to certain factors. These included the angels' supplication for them, requesting that they be admitted into the gardens by His mercy. Through His mercy, He inspired them to perform good deeds and elected angels to supplicate that they enter (the gardens).

Allah informs us that these angels sealed this supplication with the following:

﴿ ... إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٨)

﴿…Verily, You are the Almighty, the Most Wise.﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 8)*

In other words, all this originates from His perfect ability and perfect knowledge. Might is the perfection of ability, and wisdom is the perfection of knowledge. With these two attributes, He determines whatever He wills, commands and forbids, and rewards and punishes. He has made these qualities (His perfect ability and knowledge) the basis of the creation and His command.

Punishments for sins vary between legislative punishments, universal punishments (either in the heart, body or both), punishments in the barzakh after death, and punishments on the Day the bodies are gathered.

Sin is never overlooked without punishment. Yet certain people's ignorance may cause them to be unaware of the punishment that will befall them, for they are like the drunk, drugged, or sleeping who do not feel the pain. Only when they awaken and regain their senses do they feel the pain. Yet a sin resulting in punishment is as necessary as a fire resulting in burning, breaking resulting in breakage, water resulting in drowning, poison resulting in bodily harm, and pathogens resulting in disease.

The harm may occur simultaneously with the sin or afterwards, whether shortly after or after a longer duration. This is just as sickness may occur immediately after contracting it, or it may surface later. A person often errs due to this point in particular. After sinning, one does not see its effect immediately or realize it is gradually eating away at them. That is how harmful substances and poisons slowly spoil things. Either the person is treated with medicine, detoxification, and immunity or is bound for destruction.

If this happens with a single sin not countered with something that removes its effects, what about sins upon sins committed every day and hour? Indeed, Allah is the source of strength.

# Assessing Oneself in Light of These Punishments

Consider the punishments that Allah (□) has necessitated for sins. Imagine that some have already befallen you and make them drive your soul towards abandoning sins. I will present a list to suffice any sensible person who (merely) believes in part of this.

These punishments include:

- The sealing of the heart and hearing;
- The veiling of the vision;
- Locking of the heart, placing a covering upon it, staining it, and stamping it (with misguidance);
- Overturning of the heart and sight.

The overturning mentioned above makes the heart forget its Master and one's welfare. It also leads to Allah not wanting the heart to be purified. Another punishment is the heart feeling constricted and discomforted as if descending from the skies. Yet another punishment is that the heart turns

away from the truth. Its situation worsens with disease upon disease and being turned away (from the truth) increasingly until the heart overturns.

Ḥudhayfah (□) states:

> There are four types of hearts: a sparkling heart that contains a radiant lamp – that is the believer's heart; a sealed heart – that is the disbeliever's heart; an inverted heart – that is the [full] hypocrite's heart; a heart fuelled by faith and hypocrisy – and this person becomes whichever of them dominates the other.[179]

One punishment is being hindered and discouraged from performing acts of obedience. Another punishment is that the heart is deafened from hearing the truth, muted from uttering the truth, and blinded from seeing the truth. Consequently, the relationship between the heart and that priceless truth becomes like the relationship between a deaf ear and sounds, a blind eye and colours, and a mute tongue and speech. It then becomes clear that true blindness, deafness, and dumbness are that of the heart. The punishment of the limbs is secondary:

﴿ ... فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَٰكِن تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٤٦)

﴿…Verily, it is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts in their chests.﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 46)*

This does not negate the existence of the eye's physical blindness since Allah (□) mentions:

﴿ لَّيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ ... ﴿٦١﴾ ﴾ (سورة النور: ٦١)

﴿There is no blame on the blind…﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 61)*

﴿ عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١﴾ أَن جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة عبس: ١-٢)

﴿He [that is, the Prophet] frowned and turned away, when the blind man came to him.﴾ *(‘Abasa 80: 1-2)*

The meaning is that ultimate blindness, in reality, is the heart’s blindness. The eye’s blindness, relatively, is not blindness compared to the heart’s blindness. Thus, it is correct to negate it when comparing it to absolute blindness.

This point is conveyed in the following hadith:

«The strong are not those who are the strongest in wrestling. They are those who can restrain themselves when angry.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

He also said:

«The needy are not those who go around asking for charity and are content with a morsel or two. The needy are those who do not beg from people, and it is not noticed that they need to be given charity.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Such statements are plenty. One of the punishments for sinning is that it makes the heart blind, deaf, and dumb.

One punishment is the heart caving in, just as an area of land implodes along with everything on it. Likewise, the heart plummets to the lowest pits, yet its owner does not realize it. One of the signs of this collapse is the individual incessantly participating in the lowliest, filthiest, and most disgraceful practices. Conversely, the heart that Allah elevates and brings closer to Him constantly revolves around the Throne.

Another punishment is being far from righteousness, goodness, and the loftiest actions, statements, and manners. One of the salaf said, “These hearts are constantly in motion. Some of them revolve around the Throne, and some of them revolve around the toilet.”

One punishment is the heart becoming mutated and distorted, just as an image is distorted. The heart devolves into the heart of the animal the person resembles in manners, actions, and nature. Some hearts devolve into

that of a pig due to their owner's stark resemblance to it. Some hearts are transformed into the heart of a dog, donkey, snake, scorpion, or some other animal.

Allah (ﷻ) mentions:

﴿وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَا طَٰٓئِرٖ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيۡهِ إِلَّآ أُمَمٌ أَمۡثَالُكُمۚ ... ﴿٣٨﴾﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ٣٨)

﴿There is no creature that moves on the earth, and no bird that flies on its two wings, but they are communities like you…﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 38)*

This is how Sufyân ibn 'Uyaynah understands this verse:

> Some of them have the nature of predator cats, and some have the nature of dogs, pigs, or donkeys. Others hide in their garments as a peacock hides in its feathers, while others are as dull as donkeys. Some fight for supremacy, like a rooster, but others are friendly and courteous, like a pigeon. Some are spiteful, like a camel, but others are amicable, like sheep. Some are like wolves, while others resemble foxes – conniving and scheming.

Allah (ﷻ) Himself has likened the people of ignorance and deviance to donkeys, dogs, and livestock.[180] This resemblance strengthens within a person until it subtly shows on the face and those with *firâsah* notice it.[181] It continues surfacing until it appears through actions, and by then, it can be noticed by everyone. It does not stop increasing until the person becomes saturated with the (new) image, fully transformed by Allah's leave. At that point, Allah changes their physical image into that animal's image. He did so to the Jews and people like them; He will do the same to the people from this Ummah – transforming them into apes and pigs.[182]

*Subḥân Allâh*! How many inverted hearts are there whose owners have no idea? How many hearts exist that have been devolved or destroyed? How many people are deluded by other people's praise of them? How many

are deceived by Allah's concealment of them (their sins and flaws)? How many are being gradually entrapped by Allah's favours upon them? All these are forms of punishment and humiliation, though the ignorant assume they are a form of honouring.

One example is that Allah plots against the plotters, tricks the tricksters, mocks the mockers, and diverts the hearts of those diverted from the truth.

Another example is the heart becoming reversed until it sees falsehood as truth, truth as falsehood, goodness as evil, and evil as goodness. Such individuals corrupt others, yet they think they are correcting them. They turn people away from Allah's path yet believe they are inviting them to it. They exchange guidance for falsehood yet assume they are guided. They follow their desires yet assume that they are obedient to their Master.

All these are forms of punishment for the sins which affect the heart.

One punishment is the heart being veiled from the Lord in this world, then being subject to the greatest partition on the Day of Resurrection:

﴿كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

(سورة المطفِّفين: ١٤-١٥)

﴿Nay; rather their hearts have been covered with the stain of their misdeeds. Nay; verily on that Day they will be barred from seeing their Lord.﴾ *(al-Muṭaffifeen 83: 14-15)*

Sins have prevented these people from reaching their hearts. They have also stopped them from discerning what mends and purifies the heart from what corrupts and destroys it. They have also prevented these people from journeying with their hearts to their Lord so that their hearts may reach Him and they earn His nearness, honour, and comfort. Unfortunately, sins are a veil between these people and their hearts, partitioning them from their Lord and Creator.

Another punishment is a constricted life in this world and the barzakh followed by punishment in the hereafter:

﴿ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَعْمَىٰ ﴿١٢٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة طه: ١٢٤)

﴿But whoever turns away from My Reminder [the Qur'an] will have a constricted [miserable] life, and on the Day of Resurrection, We will raise him up blind.﴾ *(Ṭâ Hâ 20: 124)*

The ﴿constricted [miserable] life﴾ refers to the punishment of the grave.[183] This is part of the constricted life, but the verse has a more comprehensive meaning. Allah has constricted the lives of those who neglect Him in proportion to how much they turn away.

Even if people delight in all pleasures, their hearts still contain loneliness, disgrace, heart-tearing regrets, unfulfilled wishes, and unbearable anguish. What masks these agonies from these people is the intoxication of desires, lust, love of this world, and love of leadership. This intoxication is immense even without the intoxication of wine being involved. Also, one sobers up eventually from wine, whereas those intoxicated with desires and the love of this world often do not become sober until they arrive amongst the dead.

A constricted life is inevitable for whoever turns away from Allah's remembrance, which He sent down upon His Messenger (ﷺ). It happens in the person's worldly life, in the barzakh, and on the Appointed Day.

The eye is never comforted, the heart is never reassured, and the spirit is never at peace, except with its God (Allah) that it worships. He is al-Ḥaqq (the Truth), and everything besides Him is false. Those Allah comforts are always comforted. Yet the souls of those not comforted by Allah are torn with regret over this world. Allah (□) grants the good life only to those who believe and behave righteously:

﴿ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٧)

﴿Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely grant them their reward according to the best of their deeds.﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 97)*

In the verse mentioned above, Allah guarantees that those with faith and righteousness will be rewarded with a good worldly life and the most excellent reward on the Day of Resurrection. For them is the best of both lives, and they are alive in both worlds:

﴿ ... لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۚ وَلَدَارُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ ۚ وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٣٠)

﴿…For those who do good, there is good [reward] in this world, and the abode of the hereafter is better, and how excellent is the abode of those who fear Allah.﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 30)*

﴿وَأَنِ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ يُمَتِّعْكُم مَّتَٰعًا حَسَنًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَيُؤْتِ كُلَّ ذِى فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُۥ ۖ ... ﴿٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٣)

﴿[And to instruct you:] Seek the forgiveness of your Lord and repent to Him, so that He may grant you goodly enjoyment of life for an appointed term and bestow His grace on all who merit it…﴾ *(Hood 11: 3)*

The people of piety and excellence attain the delight and the good life of this world and the hereafter. The reality of bliss and enjoyment is a cheerful spirit and a heart filled with joy, pleasure, vibrancy, reassurance, contentment, light, and comfort. It is liberated from unlawful desires and misleading doubts. The sensual, physical pleasures can never compare with this.

Some who tasted this delight mention, “If the kings and princes realized what we experience, they would fight us for it with [their] swords.”

Another said, “Sometimes, my heart undergoes certain experiences where I say that if the people of paradise have the likes of this, they are living blissfully.”

Another explained that there is a paradise in this world similar to the paradise of the hereafter. Those who enter it will enter that paradise, while those who do not will not.

Our Prophet (ﷺ) alluded to this paradise:

«He said: When you pass by the gardens of paradise, then feast (in them).

People asked: What are the gardens of paradise?

The Prophet (ﷺ) answered: Circles of remembrance (dhikr).» (A ‘reliable but odd’ hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi; according to al-Albâni, it is reliable based on corroborating evidence)

He also said:

«What is between my house and my pulpit is a garden from the gardens of paradise.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Do not think that this verse of the Most High applies solely to the Day of Judgement:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلۡأَبۡرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٖ ١٣ وَإِنَّ ٱلۡفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٖ ١٤﴾ (سورة الانفطار: ١٣-١٤)

﴿Verily, the righteous will be in bliss, and verily the wicked will be in the blazing fire.﴾ *(al-Infiṭâr 82: 13-14)*

The righteous are in pleasure in all three abodes, while the wicked are in the blaze (in all three). What pleasure and delight in this world is better than a pure heart, a tranquil breast, knowing Allah (ﷻ), loving Him, and acting according to His commands?

Is there any life other than the life of a sound heart? Allah (□) praises His beloved Ibrâheem for his sound heart:

﴿ ۞ وَإِنَّ مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ لَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿٨٣﴾ إِذْ جَآءَ رَبَّهُۥ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الصافات: ٨٣-٨٤)

﴿Verily, among those who followed his way was Ibrâheem, for he came to his Lord with a pure heart.﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 83-84)*

He also mentions:

﴿يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٨٨-٨٩)

﴿The Day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any avail, but only he who comes to Allah with a pure heart [will be saved].﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 88-89)*

The sound heart is free from polytheism, malice, rancour, envy, stinginess, pride, love of this world, and love of leadership. It is secure from every flaw distancing it from Allah, every doubt opposing His truth, every desire opposing His command, and every longing contending with His will. This heart has escaped everything that keeps it away from Allah. It enjoys the immediate paradise of this world and, subsequently, the paradise of the barzakh and the paradise of the Last Day.

The heart can never be sound until it breaks free from five things:

- Polytheism that opposes monotheism (the oneness of Allah);
- Innovation that opposes the Sunnah;
- Lusts that contend with the commands (of Allah);
- Negligence that prevents dhikr;
- Whims that prevent sincerity and impartiality.

These five are veils that serve as a blockade from Allah. Under each veil are many different branches, and from these (different branches) come countless further branches.

For this reason, people's need to ask Allah to guide them to the straight path is extremely serious. Nothing is more urgently needed for humans than this supplication, nor is anything more beneficial. The straight path includes knowledge, strength, inward and outward actions (to perform), and (acts to) abstain from – matters that involve the person at every moment.

One may or may not know the details of the straight path, and what one does know may be greater than what one does not know. One may be capable of performing what one knows, or one may not be capable – yet this is still the straight path (to be followed) despite one's inability.

Likewise, one's carnal self may want what one can have or may not want it due to laziness, delinquency, some obstacle, or otherwise. One may perform what one's self wants, or one may decide not to. What one does perform may be sincere, or it may not. Also, one's actual sincerity may manifest in correctly following the Prophet's way, or it may not. Similarly, one may remain steadfast in following the Prophet's way or may later dismiss it from their hearts. All this is an ongoing scenario in the creation where some surpass others and some fall behind.

Guidance to these matters is not inborn in a person. When one is left to follow one's inclinations, one becomes obstructed. That is the *irkâs* (falling back) that Allah afflicted the hypocrites with for their sins. He returned them to their inclinations, namely, ignorance and oppression.

Our Lord, the Blessed and High, is upon the straight path in His decree, decisions, commands, and prohibitions. He guides whomever He wishes to the straight path through His bounty and mercy, placing guidance where it belongs. He turns away whomever He wishes from His straight path through His justice and wisdom, for such people are unsuitable (for

guidance). This is entirely in accordance with the straight path He is upon. Also, when the Day of Resurrection commences, He will make for His creation a straight path that delivers them to Him, for He is upon the straight path.

He has also made for His slaves a straight path to which He has invited them. That is a prerequisite from Him (for judgement) and His justice. Through His favour and bounty, He guides whomever He wishes to follow the path. This transpires within the scope of justice that embodies His straight path, which He is upon.

When the Day of Meeting Him commences, He will make for His creation a straight path that delivers them to His paradise. He will divert from it those who were diverted from His path in the worldly life. In contrast, He will keep upon it those who were steadfast upon His path in the worldly life.

He will allot the believers shining lights in front of them and on their right, illuminating for them the darkness of the Gathering. Each individual's path will be illuminated in accordance with the light that dwelled in their heart as a result of believing in Him, His Messenger (ﷺ), and what he came with. He will preserve their light until they traverse (the path), just as He will preserve their faith until they meet Him.

He will extinguish the hypocrites' light when they need it the most, just as He extinguished it in their hearts during the worldly life. He will materialize the sinners' actions into hooks on both sides of the path, which will snatch them. That is how they snatched them away in their worldly life, preventing them from following the path steadily. He will proportionately allot their abilities to traverse, and their speeds will be based on their abilities to traverse it during the worldly life.

He will position *al-Ḥawḍ*[184] for the believers, allowing them to drink from it in exchange for their drinking from His Sharia in this world. Those

who did not drink from His Sharia and religion in this world will be deprived of drinking from al-Ḥawḍ.

Imagine the hereafter as if you can see it and reflect on Allah's wisdom in both worlds. Learn from this a matter of absolute certainty that is subject to no doubt: this world is the planting ground for the hereafter.[185] This world is its sample and prototype. The levels of people in the hereafter, whether prosperous or doomed, will be based on their levels of faith and righteous deeds in this world. From Allah comes all success.

One of the greatest punishments for sin is the divergence from the straight path in this world and the hereafter.

# Varying Punishments for Varying Sins

Due to sins varying in degrees and harm, their punishments in this world and the hereafter vary proportionately. We will present a concise, comprehensive section on this topic with Allah's aid and beautiful grace.

The origins of sins are of two types: abandoning Allah's orders and performing the prohibited. These are the two that Allah (□) tested humankind's parents and jinn with.

Each can be divided according to location. Is it committed outwardly by the limbs or inwardly in the hearts?

They can then be further subdivided according to whether they pertain to Allah's rights or the rights of His creation. Even though His right includes every right of His creation, it is termed the creation's right because its recompense is necessary if they demand it and is waived if they dismiss it.

After that, these sins divide into four categories: tyrannical, satanic, predatory, and animalistic. Nothing falls outside these four classifications.

**Tyrannical sins** involve wrongly embodying a quality of *ruboobiyah* (Lordship), such as greatness, pride, supremacy, dominance, infallibility (God-complexes), subjugating the creation, or other similar forms of oppression.

Polytheism in the Lordship of Allah falls into this category, and it has two forms:

1. Polytheism in His names and attributes, and considering others alongside Him as gods.
2. Polytheism in dealing with Him. This second type may not necessitate entering the hellfire, even though it voids every act where another was sought alongside Allah.

This category involves the greatest types of sin. It includes speaking on behalf of Allah regarding His commands and creation without knowledge. Whoever indulges in these sins has challenged Allah (□) in His kingdom and Lordship and has set equals to Him. That is the greatest sin before Allah, and no (righteous) action benefits alongside it.

**Satanic sins** involve resembling Satan via:

- Envy
- Transgression
- Deceit
- Malice
- Trickery
- Scheming
- Enjoining and beautifying disobedience to Allah
- Forbidding and hindering obedience to Him

- Bringing innovations to His religion
- Inviting to heresy and misguidance

Like the first category, this category is harmful, though relatively less destructive.

**Predatory sins** include enmity, anger, bloodshed, and pouncing on the weak and incompetent. Stemming from these are various forms of abusing humanity, and types of hostility and oppression.

**Animalistic sins**[186] involve gluttony and keenness to satisfy the desires of the stomach and private parts. Sins arising from these include fornication, theft, usurping an orphan's property,[187] coveting, stinginess, cowardice, pessimism, and so on.

This category embodies most sins committed by the creation and that is due to them being incapable of performing the predatory and tyrannous sins. Later, it leads them into the other categories, dragging them by its reins into further indulgence. They eventually pass beyond it to the predatory sins and then to the satanic. Finally, they challenge the Lordship of Allah and ascribe partners to His oneness.

Whoever reflects on this, and gives it due contemplation, will realize that sins are the tunnel to disbelief and polytheism, namely, challenging Allah in His Lordship.

# Major and Minor Sins

The Qur'an, Sunnah, and consensus of the Companions, their successors, and the imams have proved that sins are major and minor.

﴿إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ٣١)

﴿If you abstain from the major [sins] out of what you have been forbidden to do, We will erase your [minor] sins for you and admit you to a place of honour [paradise].﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 31)*

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّمَمَ ۚ ... ﴿٣٢﴾﴾ (سورة النجم: ٣٢)

﴿Those who avoid major sins and shameful deeds – except for minor lapses…﴾ *(an-Najm 53: 32)*

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The five (obligatory) prayers, two Friday congregational prayers, and two consecutive Ramadans expiate the minor sins between these times, provided the major sins are avoided.» (Muslim)

These (good) acts that expiate have three degrees:

1. Acts incapable of expiating minor sins due to their weakness, lack of sincerity, or incorrect performance.
2. Acts that counteract the minor sins but do not reach the level of expiating any major sin.
3. Acts that are strong enough to expiate minor sins and some major sins.

Reflect on this, for it will dismiss many dilemmas for you.

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Shall I inform you of the greatest of major sins?

People replied: Of course, O Messenger of Allah.

He told them: Associating partners with Allah, cruelty to parents, and false testimony.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

«'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood asked: O Messenger of Allah! Which sin is the greatest?

The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: To affirm an equal to Allah when He is the One Who created you.

He asked: Then what?

He replied: To kill your child, fearing there will not be enough food for the family.

He asked: Then what?

He replied: To fornicate with your neighbour's wife.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Allah (□) reveals in confirmation of this:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدۡعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقۡتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفۡسَ ٱلَّتِي حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا يَزۡنُونَۚ ... ٦٨﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦٨)

﴿Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah; and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of justice; and who do not commit fornication or adultery…﴾ *(al-Furqân 25: 68)*

People differ over the major sins: are they confined to a specific number? Those who confine them differ over their number:

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood mentions that they are four. Ibn ‘Umar states that they are seven. ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ indicates that they are nine. Others claim they are eleven. Yet others say they are seventy.

Abu Ṭâlib al-Makki mentions:

> I collected them from the Companions’ statements and found four related to the heart: associating partners with Allah; persisting in sinning; despairing of Allah’s mercy; and feeling secure from Allah’s plan.
>
> I found four connected with the tongue: false testimony; slandering chaste women; false oaths; and sorcery.
>
> Three pertained to the body: drinking wine; usurping the property of an orphan; and dealing in interest [ribâ].
>
> Two pertained to the private parts: fornication and homosexuality.
>
> Two are committed by the hands: murder and theft.
>
> One is committed by the feet: fleeing from battle.
>
> One is related to the entire body: cruelty to parents.

Among those who do not confine them to a specific number, some believe that:

- Doing anything Allah has forbidden is a major sin.
- Doing anything His Messenger (ﷺ) has forbidden is a minor sin.

Another group states that if an act is forbidden, coupled with the threat of being cursed or incurring anger or punishment, then it constitutes a major sin. Whatever is not connected with anything of this sort is a minor sin.

Others indicate that whatever leads to a legislative punishment in this world or a threat in the hereafter is a major sin. In contrast, whatever does not lead to either is a minor sin.

Some claim that if all the (previous) legislations agreed that it is unlawful, it is a major sin. They claim that a minor sin is whatever was made unlawful in one Sharia but not in another.

Another view is that if an act leads to its doer being cursed by Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), it is a major sin.

It has (also) been said that major sins constitute everything mentioned from the beginning of Soorat an-Nisâ'[188] until Allah's statement:

﴿إِن تَجْتَنِبُواْ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ ... ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ٣١)

﴿If you abstain from the major [sins] out of what you have been forbidden to do, We will erase your [minor] sins for you…﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 31)*

Those who do not divide them into major and minor hold that every sin is major, considering the audacity against Allah and defying His command. They view that all sins should be considered major, bearing in mind Whose command was defied and Whose sanctities were violated.

They explain that Allah (□) is neither harmed nor affected by sins, which means no sin would be greater than another in His Eyes. The point is that He is being opposed and disobeyed, irrespective of the type of sin.

They indicate that the punishment is actually for transgressing the right of Allah, the Blessed and High. Suppose a person drinks wine or has illicit intercourse without knowing it is unlawful. In that case, they are

guilty of both ignorance and indulgence in the unlawful. The one who knew it was unlawful would be guilty of only one of those two charges yet would still deserve the punishment (while the ignorant offender would not). That proves that the punishment for sins is actually for insolence and indulgence (not the violation itself).

They argue that sin involves belittling Allah's commands and prohibitions and violating His sanctity, and all sins do the same.

They indicate that one should not consider whether the sin is perceived as great or small, but rather the grandeur of the One being defied and that one has grossly violated His sanctity by defying Him. That applies to all types of sin. Suppose a grand, authoritative ruler commanded one person to travel on a mission to a distant land and another to tend to a matter nearby. However, if both disobeyed this command, they would equally fall out of favour and be despised.

The sins of those not performing Hajj while living in Makkah or leaving the Friday prayer while living near a mosque are more hideous in Allah's sight than those who were further away from these places. That is because the duty of the former is greater than the latter.

They also mention the example of a person owning two hundred dirhams and not paying zakat, while another owning one million and not paying zakat. Both are equally withholding what is mandatory upon them. It is conceivable that their punishments could be the same if each insists on withholding zakat due on the property, regardless of whether that property is little or a lot.

One can resolve this predicament by understanding that Allah (□) dispatched His Messengers, revealed His Books, and created the heavens and earth to be known, worshipped, and singled out. We should understand that religion, obedience, and devotion are solely for Allah:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾﴾ (سورة الذاريات: ٥٦)

﴿I have not created the jinn and humans except to worship Me.﴾ *(adh-Dhâriyât 51: 56)*

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ ... ﴿٨٥﴾﴾ (سورة الحِجر: ٨٥)

﴿We have not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, except for a true purpose…﴾ *(al-Ḥijr 15: 85)*

﴿ ۞ جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْكَعْبَةَ ٱلْبَيْتَ ٱلْحَرَامَ قِيَٰمًا لِّلنَّاسِ وَٱلشَّهْرَ ٱلْحَرَامَ وَٱلْهَدْىَ وَٱلْقَلَٰٓئِدَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٧﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٩٧)

﴿Allah has made the Kaaba, the Sacred House, a source of stability [and well-being] for humankind, as well as the sacred month, the sacrificial animals and the garlands. That is so that you might know that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and on earth, and that Allah has knowledge of all things.﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 97)*

He informs us that the purpose of the creation and command is:

- Allah is known by His names and attributes.
- He is worshipped exclusively without partners.
- People uphold justice, the basis of the heavens and the earth.

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ ... ﴿٢٥﴾﴾ (سورة الحديد: ٢٥)

﴿We sent Our Messengers with clear signs, and sent down with them the Book and the criteria of justice, so that people may uphold equity…﴾ *(al-Ḥadeed 57: 25)*

He informs us that He sent His Messengers and revealed His Books so that people can maintain justice and equity. Worshipping Him alone is the greatest form of equity and the pinnacle and stronghold of justice. Ascribing partners to Him is most certainly an injustice:

﴿ ... يَٰبُنَيَّ لَا تُشۡرِكۡ بِٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرۡكَ لَظُلۡمٌ عَظِيمٞ ١٣ ﴾ (سورة لقمان: ١٣)

﴿…O my son, do not associate anything in worship with Allah, for associating others in worship with Him is indeed grievous wrongdoing.﴾ *(Luqmân 31: 13)*

Polytheism is the greatest injustice, and monotheism is the ultimate form of justice. The greatest of the major sins contradict monotheism the most.

Whatever is more contradictory to this purpose (of creation) is the greatest of the major sins, and their varying degrees are based on their degree of opposition to this. Similarly, whatever is more in agreement with this purpose is the greatest of obligations and constitutes the most important acts of obedience.

Ponder over this fundamental principle carefully and understand its finer details. Understand the wisdom of the Wisest Judge, the Supremely Knowledgeable, in all that He has made obligatory upon His slaves and deemed unlawful, and in the varying degrees of obedience and sin.

Since associating partners with Allah negates the very essence of this purpose, it is the greatest of major sins. Allah has forbidden paradise to those who ascribe partners to Him. He has permitted the monotheists to (in cases of just war) spill their blood, confiscate their property, and take them and their families as captives (in battle) due to their refusal to submit to Him.[189]

Allah (□) refuses to:

- Accept the actions of those who associate partners with Him;

- Accept intercession on their behalf;
- Respond to a single supplication of theirs in the hereafter;
- Overlook a single slip-up of theirs.

These are the most ignorant of creation since they ascribe rivals to Allah from His creation. That is the epitome of ignorance regarding Allah (□), just as it is the epitome of injustice from such people. These people have not harmed their Lord. Rather, they have been unjust only to themselves.

# The Reality of Polytheism and its Types

Some claim that polytheists only mean to exalt the Lord, the Blessed and the High. They say His Majesty is above being approached without mediators and intercessors, just like with the rulers. They approach these intermediaries without any intention of belittling the Lordship (of Allah); they claim they intend to glorify it!

They may claim, "We only worship these intermediaries to bring us closer to Him, direct us towards Him, and admit us before Him. He is the ultimate objective, though; these are only means and intercessors."

So why does this act incur His wrath and condemn such people to hellfire for eternity? Why has Allah permitted the monotheists to (in cases of just war) spill their blood, confiscate their property, and take them and their families as captives (in battle)?

Could Allah (□) permit His slaves to draw nearer to Him through mediators and intercessors? That (falsely) implies that the Sharia would permit polytheism. Both human nature and sound logic reject polytheism, so how can the Sharia legislate it? Why is it not forgiven, as opposed to the other sins?

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغۡفِرُ أَن يُشۡرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغۡفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ ... ﴿١١٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١١٦)

﴿Allah does not forgive the ascription of partners to Him, but He forgives anything other than that to whomever He wills…﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 116)*

Ponder over this question, then focus your heart and mind on its answer. Do not underestimate this point. It clarifies the difference between:

- Polytheists and monotheists;
- Those who know about Allah and those ignorant of Him;
- The people of paradise and hellfire.

We say that all help and success come from Allah, and we obtain strength and direction from Him. No one can misguide those whom Allah guides, and no one can guide those whom He misguides. No one can withhold what He grants, and no one can grant what He withholds.

There are two types of polytheism:

1. Polytheism related to the One being worshipped and His names, attributes, and actions.
2. Polytheism related to (our) worship and interaction with Him, even if the person believes He is unrivalled in His being, attributes, or actions.

The **first type of polytheism** has two forms:

The polytheism of *ta'ṭeel* (denial).[190] It is the ugliest form of polytheism, such as when Fir'awn enquired:

﴿ ... وَمَا رَبُّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢٣)

﴿…And what is the 'Lord of the worlds'?﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 23)*

Fir'awn told Hâmân (his minister):

﴿ ...يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ ٱبۡنِ لِي صَرۡحٗا لَّعَلِّيٓ أَبۡلُغُ ٱلۡأَسۡبَٰبَ ٣٦ أَسۡبَٰبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُۥ كَٰذِبٗاۚ... ٣٧ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٣٦-٣٧)

﴿…O Hâmân, build me a tower, so that I may attain the means of access – access to the heavens, and have a look at the God of Moosâ, for verily I think he is a liar…﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 36-37)*

Polytheism and denial are inherently linked to one another. Polytheists are also guilty of denial, and deniers are also guilty of polytheism. Polytheism does not need to entail full denial, though. Polytheists may affirm the Creator and His attributes but deny His sole right to be worshipped.

The fundamental origin of polytheism is denial, which is divided into three categories:

1. The creation denying its Creator and Designer.
2. The creation denying that the Creator is perfect and divine by denying His names, qualities, and actions.
3. The creation denying its duty to interact with Him and offer worship, devotion, and adoration to Him alone.

Such polytheists are the pantheists who hold that there is no Creator and creation. They maintain that these are not two separate things. They claim that al-Ḥaqq (the True One; Allah), Who is flawlessly transcendent, is, in reality, the comparable creation as well.

This form of polytheism also includes atheists who claim that the universe is pre-eternal and everlasting.[191] They argue that it was never non-existent and that it always was and always will be. They believe that every unprecedented event is based on causes and factors that led to its existence. They call them souls and intellects.

This polytheism also includes those who deny the Lord's names, qualities, and actions, like the Jahmites and the Qarmatians.[192] They did not affirm for Allah a single name or attribute. They considered the creation more complete than Him since the completeness of a being is contingent upon its names and attributes.

The polytheism of those who claim there are other gods besides Allah but do not deny His names, attributes, or Lordship. This is the polytheism of the Christians who claim that He is the third of three (gods) or allege that Jesus ('Eesâ ibn Maryam) was a god and his mother was a god. It also includes the Magians, who attribute good events to light and evil events to darkness![193] The Qadarites believe that creatures create their actions, which take place without Allah's permission, decree, and will.[194] In this regard, they resemble the Magians.[195]

This also refers to the polytheism of the one who argued with Ibrâheem about his Lord:

﴿ ... قَالَ إِبۡرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّيَ ٱلَّذِي يُحۡيِۦ وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا۠ أُحۡيِۦ وَأُمِيتُۖ ... ﴿٢٥٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٥٨)

﴿…Ibrâheem said: My Lord is the He Who gives life and causes death. He said: I give life and cause death…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 258)*

This person claimed to be equal to Allah (ﷻ) and able to give life and cause death, just as Allah gives life and causes death. Ibrâheem cornered him by asking him to make the sun rise from a direction other than the east.[196] As some debaters claim, this was not a transition (to another argument). It was to corner him with his claim if it were true.

The same type of polytheism is practised by all those who worship the stars and celestial bodies, considering them as lords who manage this universe's affairs; it is the creed of the polytheistic Sabians and others.[197] It also includes those who worship the sun, moon or other objects.

Some such polytheists claim that their object of worship is the true deity or that theirs is the greatest deity. Others allege that theirs is one of the legitimate deities; if they worship it, it will favour and care for them. Some claim that their lesser deity brings them closer to the deity above him and that this higher deity brings them closer to the one above him. Eventually, all these deities bring them closer to Allah (□). At times, you find that these deities and intermediaries are many, and at other times, they are fewer.

**Polytheism in worship** is more straightforward and a degree less serious. It applies to those who believe that only Allah deserves to be worshipped. Only He harms, benefits, grants or withholds; there is no deity or Lord but Him. However, they do not worship or serve only Him. Instead, they sometimes act for personal gain, worldly desires, status or reputation before the rest of the creation. In other words, a share of their actions and striving is for Allah, a share is for their selfish desires, a share is for Satan, and a share is for the creation.

This condition applies to most people, and this is the polytheism referred to here:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: The polytheism in this Ummah is more hidden than the creeping of the ant.

People asked: How can we be saved from it, O Messenger of Allah?

He replied: Say:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أُشْرِكَ بِكَ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا لَا أَعْلَمُ.»

*Allâhumma inni a‘oodhu bika an ushrika bika wa anâ a‘lam, wa astaghfiruka limâ lâ a‘lam*.

(O Allah! I seek Your protection from knowingly ascribing partners to You, and I seek Your forgiveness if I have inadvertently done so.)» (Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbân, aḍ-Ḍiyâ’, Ibn ‘Adiy, and al-Baghawi; graded weak by al-Albâni)[198]

Showing off amounts to polytheism:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ لِقَآءَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَٰلِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَحَدًۢا ﴿١١٠﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١١٠)

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: I am but a human being like yourselves, [except that] it has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and include no one else in the worship due to his Lord.﴾ *(al-Kahf 18: 110)*

In other words, as there is only one God, it is only befitting to worship and serve Him alone. Righteous works should be sincerely for Allah, with no intention of showing off; they are those acts which conform to the Sunnah.[199] Following is one of the supplications of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb:

«اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَمَلِي كُلَّهُ صَالِحًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لِوَجْهِكَ خَالِصًا، وَلَا تَجْعَلْ لِأَحَدٍ فِيهِ شَيْئًا.»

*Allâhumm-aj‘al ‘amali kullahu ṣâliḥâ, waj‘alhu li wajhika khâliṣâ, wa lâ taj‘al li aḥadin feehi shay’â.*

[O Allah! Make all of my actions righteous, make them sincerely for Your Face, and do not allow anyone (to have) a share (of my intention) in it.][200]

This type of polytheism voids the action’s reward. It may lead to punishment if the action is obligatory, for it is like not doing the action. One would be punished for abandoning (Allah’s) commands, for He commands us to worship Him sincerely:

﴿وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓا۟ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ حُنَفَآءَ ... ﴿٥﴾﴾ (سورة البيِّنة: ٥)

﴿Although they were enjoined only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him, being true in faith to Him alone…﴾ *(al-Bayyinah 98: 5)*

Those who do not sincerely worship Allah disobey His commands. They are doing something incorrect, which will not be accepted.

In a hadith reported by Abu Hurayrah, the Prophet (ﷺ) said that Allah has explained:

«I do not need partners. Those who perform a deed for others are left to (be repaid by) them, and I will have nothing to do with them.» (Muslim)

This polytheism divides into forgiven and not forgiven and into major and minor. The first (major) form divides into great and greater, none of which is forgiven. It includes polytheism in love and the exaltation of Allah. It means loving a created thing the way Allah should be loved, and this is the polytheism which Allah does not forgive:

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ ... ﴿١٦٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٦٥)

﴿Yet there are some people who take [for worship] others besides Allah, as equals [with Allah]; they love them as they should love Allah. But those who believe have greater love for Allah…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 165)*

When they are ultimately gathered in the blaze of the hellfire, these polytheists will say to their deities:

﴿ تَٱللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٧﴾ إِذْ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٩٧-٩٨)

﴿By Allah, we were clearly misguided when we deemed you equal to the Lord of the worlds.﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 97-98)*

It is known that they did not equate others with Him in creation, providing sustenance, giving life, causing death, or sovereignty and ability. They only equated others with Him in their love, deification, humility, and obedience. This is the epitome of ignorance and injustice! How can dust be

equal to the Lord of lords? How can slaves be equal to the Owner of their necks? How can the inherently poor, weak, incompetent, and dependent, who are not even responsible for their existence, be equal to the inherently rich and capable? How can the poor be equal to the One Whose inherent qualities include riches, ability, dominion, generosity, kindness, knowledge, mercy, and absolute perfection?

Is any injustice more hideous than this? Is any verdict more unfair? How can they equate others with the One Who has no equal in His creation?

﴿ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ وَٱلنُّورَ ۖ ثُمَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١﴾﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١)

﴿All praise be to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and made the darkness and the light. Yet those who disbelieve ascribe equals to their Lord.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 1)*

He is the One Who created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and light. These polytheists have made Him equal to those who do not own a speck's weight in the heavens or earth! This is an awful equation – the greatest and most despicable injustice![201]

After this comes polytheism in actions, statements, and intentions.

## Polytheism in actions

Polytheism in actions comprises:

- Prostrating to other than Allah;
- Circling in devotion other than His House (the Kaaba);

- Shaving the head in humility and devotion to other than Him;
- Kissing stones other than the Black Stone, which is His covenant on earth;[202]
- Kissing the graves, wiping against them (for blessings), and prostrating to them.

The Prophet (ﷺ) cursed those who used the graves of the Prophets and the righteous as mosques, where they prayed to Allah. What about those who have taken graves and idols as objects of worship instead of Allah?

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«May Allah curse the Jews and Christians, for they have used the graves of their Prophets as places of worship.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«The worst people are those who are alive when the Hour comes and those who have used their Prophets' graves as places of worship.» (Bukhari)[203]

The Prophet (ﷺ) is also reported to have said:

«Those who came before you used graves as places of worship, but I forbid you to do so.» (Muslim)

The Prophet also (ﷺ) said:

«May Allah curse those women who frequently visit the graves and those who erect mosques and lanterns upon them.» (Recorded by Aḥmad and Ibn Ḥibbân; al-Albâni graded it weak)

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah is very angry with the people who use their Prophets' graves as places of worship.» (al-Bazzâr recorded the complete chain of narration; Ibn 'Abdul-Barr graded it authentic)

Abu Sa‘eed also states:

> When a righteous person died in the past, they would build a mosque upon the grave and put images there. These will be the worst creatures in Allah’s sight on the Day of Resurrection.[204]

This concerns those who prostrate to Allah in a mosque (erected) upon a grave. So what about those who prostrate to the grave itself?

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«O Allah! Do not make my grave a shrine that is worshipped.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) protected the sanctity of worshipping only Allah to the highest degree. That was to the extent that he forbade offering a supererogatory prayer to Allah (□) at sunrise and sunset. This command was a precaution against resembling those who worship the sun or prostrate to it at these times. He also forbade praying after the ‘aṣr and *fajr* prayers as a precaution. That was because these times were near the (aforementioned) times when the polytheists prostrated to the sun.

In the following hadith reported by Abu Hurayrah, the Prophet (ﷺ) cautioned against prostrating to anything other than Allah:

«It is unbefitting for anyone to prostrate to anyone but Allah.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Ḥibbân, Ibn ‘Adiy, al-Bayhaqi, al-Ḥâkim, and al-Bazzâr; authenticated by al-Albâni)

Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) use ‘unbefitting’ (or ‘not befitting’) to refer to emphatically inappropriate matters:

﴿وَمَا يَنۢبَغِي لِلرَّحۡمَٰنِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ٩٢﴾ (سورة مريم: ٩٢)

﴿For it is not befitting for the Most Gracious to beget a son.﴾ *(Maryam 19: 92)*

﴿وَمَا عَلَّمۡنَٰهُ ٱلشِّعۡرَ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِي لَهُۥٓۚ ... ٦٩﴾ (سورة يس: ٦٩)

﴿And We did not give him [Prophet Muhammad] knowledge of poetry, nor is it befitting for him…﴾ *(Yâ Seen 36: 69)*[205]

﴿وَمَا تَنَزَّلَتْ بِهِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُمْ وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٢١١﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢١٠-٢١١)

﴿It was not the devils who brought this [Qur'an] down. It is not appropriate [befitting] for them to do that, nor is it within their capability.﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 210-211)*

﴿... مَا كَانَ يَنۢبَغِى لَنَآ أَن نَّتَّخِذَ مِن دُونِكَ مِنْ أَوْلِيَآءَ ... ﴿١٨﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ١٨)

﴿…It was not proper [befitting] for us to take anyone as an ally besides You [and worship him]…﴾ *(al-Furqân 25: 18)*

## Polytheism in statements

Polytheism in statements refers to swearing by other than Allah. Abu ad-Dardâ' narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Whoever swears by other than Allah is guilty of polytheism.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭayâlisi, Abu Dâwood, and at-Tirmidhi; authenticated by al-Ḥâkim and Ibn Ḥibbân)

An example is someone saying, "Whatever Allah and you will."

It was confirmed in a narration by Ibn 'Abbâs:

«A man said to the Prophet (ﷺ): Whatever Allah and you will.

The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him: Have you made me an equal to Allah? Say: Whatever Allah alone wills.» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *al-Adab al-*

*Mufrad*], Aḥmad, Ibn Mâjah, al-Bayhaqi, Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, and an-Nasâ'i with a reliable chain of narration)

The hadith stands even though Allah has affirmed that a person has a will:

﴿لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمۡ أَن يَسۡتَقِيمَ ٢٨﴾ (سورة التكوير: ٢٨)

﴿For whoever among you wills to tread the straight path.﴾ *(at-Takweer 81: 28)*

What about those who say any of the following or anything similar:

- I am relying upon Allah and you.
- I am in Allah's safety and yours.
- I have nothing but Allah and you.
- This is from Allah and you.
- This is from Allah's blessings and your blessings.
- I have Allah in the heavens and you on the earth.
- I swear by Allah and the life of So-and-So.
- This vow is to Allah and So-and-So.
- I repent to Allah and So-and-So.
- I have hope in Allah and So-and-So.

Compare these statements with the one who said, "Whatever Allah and you will." Check which is more hideous. It will become clear that these (latter) statements are more deserving of the Prophet's response mentioned above.

The man (mentioned in the above hadith) made the Prophet (ﷺ) equal to Allah when he said, "Whatever Allah and you will." Whoever utters such

statements equates the Lord of the worlds with those not even close to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) in anything. In fact, they may even be his enemies.

The following are all strictly the right of Allah:

- *Sujood* (prostration)
- *'Ibâdah* (worship)
- *Tawakkul* (reliance)
- *Inâbah* (the heart's devotion)
- *Taqwâ* (piety)
- *Khashyah* (awe)
- *Taḥassub* (taking as a Victor)
- *Tawbah* (repentance)
- *Nadhr* (vowing)
- *Ḥalif* (swearing an oath)
- *Tasbeeḥ*
- *Takbeer*
- *Tahleel*
- *Taḥmeed*
- *Istighfâr*
- Shaving the head in humility and devotion
- Circling the Kaaba
- Supplication

It is incorrect and unbefitting to associate these with others even if they are the nearest angels or the messengers.

Al-Aswad ibn Saree‘ reported:

«A man was brought to the Prophet (ﷺ) after sinning.

When the man stood before him, he said: O Allah! I repent to You, and I do not repent to Muhammad (ﷺ).

The Prophet (ﷺ) remarked: He knows Who has the right (to repentance).» (Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim and aṭ-Ṭabarâni)[206]

## Polytheism in motives and intentions

Polytheism in motives and intentions is a shoreless ocean that few escape. This polytheism constitutes seeking the pleasure of anyone other than Allah. It is done through actions or intending something other than nearness to and reward from Him.

Sincerity means that our statements, actions, and motives should be purely for Allah. This is the monotheistic way of Prophet Ibrâheem, which Allah commanded all His slaves to follow. Allah accepts only this, and this is the reality of Islam:

﴿ وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ٨٥)

﴿If anyone seeks a religion other than Islam, never will it be accepted from him; and in the hereafter he will be among the losers.﴾ *(Âl ‘Imrân 3: 85)*

This is the way of Ibrâheem, and those who turn away from this are the greatest fools.[207]

If we understand this, the doors open to answer the question above (finally). We say: All correctness comes from Allah.

The essence of polytheism is to resemble the Creator and to liken the creation to Him. This is the actual *tashbeeh.*[208] It means not affirming for Allah alone the perfect attributes He and His Messenger (ﷺ) have described Him with. Those whose hearts Allah has inverted, whose sight He has blinded, and whose minds He has confused think they should do the opposite. They think they must liken Him to His creation to exalt and obey Him. This type of polytheist likens the creation to the Creator in His exclusive divine qualities.

One of the exclusive qualities of the Divine (Allah) is that He alone harms, benefits, grants, and withholds.[209] This means one should direct supplication, fear, hope, and reliance to Him alone. Those who direct these to a creature have likened that creature to the Creator. They have considered one who cannot give benefit, harm, life, death, or resurrection similar to the One controlling all things.

The reins of all matters are in His Hands, and they return to Him. Whatever He wishes occurs, and whatever He does not wish does not occur. No one can withhold what He grants, and no one can grant what He withholds. If He opens a door of mercy for someone, no one can prevent it (from reaching that person). If He withholds something from someone, no one can make it reach the person. It is most despicable to liken this incompetent and inherently poor creature to (Allah), the inherently rich and capable.

Another exclusive quality of the Divine is absolute perfection from every angle – perfection that involves no deficiency whatsoever. This means that worship, exaltation, veneration, awe, supplication, fear, hope, the heart's devotion, repentance, reliance, seeking aid, and absolute love and humility must be for Him alone. Reason, the revelation, and fiṭrah all assert that these must be for only Him, not for others. Whoever offers this to someone other than Him has likened this person to the One Who has no one

like Him, no equal or rival. Due to the atrocious nature of this heinous act and the tremendous injustice it involves, He has informed His slaves that He does not forgive it despite His mercy.

The Divine has another exclusive quality. He alone deserves servitude, which stands on two pillars: absolute love and humility. This is true servitude. People's varying levels of servitude are based on their varying levels of absolute love and humility.

Those who give love and humility to others have likened them to Him by (offering them) what is exclusively His right. It is impossible for any Sharia to permit this, and it is despicable to everyone's intellect and fiṭrah.[210]

The devils have distorted the inborn natural inclination of most human beings, corrupted their intellect, and hijacked them. Only those Allah has destined to prosper remained true to their original natural disposition towards goodness. He sent them His Messengers and revealed to them His Books containing what matched their intellects and human nature. As a result, such people gained light upon their light:

﴿ ... يَهۡدِي ٱللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ ... ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة النور: ٣٥)

﴿…Allah guides to His light whomever He will...﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 35)*

Another exclusive quality of the Divine is that He alone deserves prostration; those who prostrate to anyone other than Him have also likened the creation to Him. Trust and reliance are other exclusive qualities of His;[211] those who trust and rely (solely) upon others have likened them to Him. He alone deserves repentance; those who repent to others have likened them to Him. Those who swear by another person have likened this person to Allah, for we should swear only by His name.

Those who seek to 'resemble the Creator' claim greatness and majesty. They invite people to flatter them, praise them, exalt them,

surrender to them, turn their hearts towards them with fear and hope, and seek protection and strength (from them). These creatures seek to resemble Allah and challenge His Lordship and divinity. They deserve to be humiliated and debased by Allah and trampled on by the creation.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has mentioned: Greatness is My garment, and pride is My cloak. If anyone challenges Me in either of them, I will punish them.» (Muslim)

Those who design images with their hands will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection for seeking to resemble Allah in craftsmanship. So what is expected of those seeking to resemble Allah in Lordship and divinity?

The Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said:

«The people with the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be the image makers. They will be told: Give life to what you created.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) is also reported to have said:

«Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: The greatest wrongdoers are those who try to create something like My creation. Let them create even the tiniest thing. Let them create a seed, or let them create a grain of barley.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

By mentioning the tiniest thing and the grain of barley, He calls attention to everything greater than it.

This condition is of those who seek to resemble Him by producing an image. So what about those who sought to resemble Him in His exclusive qualities of Lordship and divinity? It is the same for those seeking to resemble Allah in a name unbefitting of anyone but Him, like ‘the King of Kings’, ‘the Supreme Ruler’, or similar names denoting supremacy.

It has been confirmed that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«To Allah, the most disgraceful name is ‘the King of Kings’, for Allah is the only Ultimate King.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«The person who angers Allah the most is the one who accepts being named ‘the King of Kings’.» (Muslim)

This is Allah’s wrath and anger upon those who seek to resemble Him in names unbefitting of anyone but Him. He alone is the King of Kings, and He alone is the Supreme Ruler. He rules over all the rulers and passes His judgement on them; no one else does so.

A great fundamental point here uncovers the secret behind this issue. Allah views evil suspicions of Him as the greatest sin. They are contrary to His divine perfection and His names and attributes. Allah threatens those who assume evil of Him with something He has never threatened anyone else with:

﴿ ... ٱلظَّـآنِّينَ بِٱللَّهِ ظَنَّ ٱلسَّوۡءِۚ عَلَيۡهِمۡ دَآئِرَةُ ٱلسَّوۡءِۖ وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَعَنَهُمۡ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمۡ جَهَنَّمَۖ وَسَآءَتۡ مَصِيرًا ٦ ﴾ (سورة الفتح: ٦)

﴿…who harbour evil thoughts about Allah. An evil turn of fortune will befall them; Allah is angry with them and has cursed them; He has prepared hell for them – an evil journey’s end.﴾ *(al-Fatḥ 48: 6)*

The Most High warns those who have denied one of His attributes:

﴿ وَذَٰلِكُمۡ ظَنُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِي ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمۡ أَرۡدَىٰكُمۡ فَأَصۡبَحۡتُم مِّنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٢٣ ﴾ (سورة فُصِّلَت: ٢٣)

﴿But that thought of yours that you thought about your Lord has led to your ruin, and now you are among the losers.﴾ *(Fuṣṣilat 41: 23)*

His beloved Ibrâheem asked (his father):

﴿ ... مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ أَئِفْكًا ءَالِهَةً دُونَ ٱللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ فَمَا ظَنُّكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الصافات: ٨٥-٨٧)

﴿…What are these that you worship? Is it falsehood – gods other than Allah – that you seek? What, then, do you think of the Lord of the worlds?﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 85-87)*

If you have been worshipping others, how do you assume He will recompense you when you meet Him? What led you and compelled you to worship others besides Him? Did you assume that His names, attributes, and Lordship were imperfect?

You should have rightfully assumed that He knows and is capable of everything. He does not need anyone, but everyone needs Him. You should have assumed that He maintains and manages His creation with equity single-handedly without associates. You should have assumed that He is completely aware of the minute details of all matters. Nothing in His creation is hidden from Him. He alone suffices for everything, and He needs no supporters…

He is inherently the Most Merciful, whose mercy does not require inciting His sympathy. The other monarchs and leaders are different. They need to be informed about the condition of their subjects, and they need help to fulfil people's needs. Their subjects need to beg them for mercy and compassion through intercessors. These leaders depend on mediators because of their need, weakness, incompetence, and limited knowledge.

Allah is the One capable of everything, inherently free of needs, and fully aware of everything. He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, whose mercy is more expansive than all things. Mediation between Him and His creation violates His right to His Lordship and divinity, and His unique oneness. This is also an evil assumption about Him. It is impossible

that He would allow His slaves to use mediators. Even sound logic and fiṭrah deem this inappropriate. Every sound mind agrees without hesitation that nothing is more appalling than this. Worshippers glorify what they worship and humble themselves before it. The Lord alone has the right to absolute exaltation, deification, veneration, and humility. It is the greatest injustice to give His right or a share in His right to others, especially when these 'partners' are His slaves and His property:

﴿ ضَرَبَ لَكُم مَّثَلًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ هَل لَّكُم مِّن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم مِّن شُرَكَآءَ فِى مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ فَأَنتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢٨)

﴿He makes this comparison, drawn from your own lives: do you have partners among those slaves whom you own, who share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you, so that you fear them as you fear one another? Thus We explain the revelations in detail for people of understanding.﴾ *(ar-Room 30: 28)*

People are offended by (the thought of) their slaves being their partners in their livelihood. How can they ascribe partners to Him in the divinity solely His that others do not deserve? Those who worship His creation do not revere Him properly, as the Most High mentions:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَن يَخْلُقُوا۟ ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ ٱجْتَمَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ ۖ وَإِن يَسْلُبْهُمُ ٱلذُّبَابُ شَيْـًٔا لَّا يَسْتَنقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۚ ضَعُفَ ٱلطَّالِبُ وَٱلْمَطْلُوبُ ﴿٧٣﴾ مَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٧٣-٧٤)

﴿O people, an example is being presented, so listen to it: those on whom you call besides Allah can never create even a fly, even if they all came

together to do that. And if the fly snatches something away from them, they cannot recover it from it. How weak are both the pursuer and the pursued! They have not given due recognition to Allah. Verily, Allah is indeed Strong, Almighty.﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 73-74)*[212]

They do not revere Him properly when worshipping those who cannot create even the smallest, weakest creature. If a fly stole anything they possessed, they would be incapable of retrieving it.

﴿وَمَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ وَٱلْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ مَطْوِيَّٰتٌۢ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾﴾ (سورة الزُّمَر: ٦٧)

﴾They have not given due recognition to Allah. On the Day of Resurrection, the entire earth will be in His grip, and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right Hand. Glorified and exalted be Allah far above the partners they ascribe to Him!﴿ *(az-Zumar 39: 67)*

They do not revere Allah properly when they disregard His grandeur by associating others with Him and worshipping those who possess nothing. They are the weakest, most incompetent of beings. They do not give the Mighty and Honourable due reverence because they ascribe partners to Him by worshipping the weak and powerless.

Some say He has not sent a Messenger to His creation or revealed any scripture. These people do not revere Him properly because they attribute to Him something inappropriate. They falsely allege that He would neglect His creation, ruin them, abandon them without purpose, and create them for vain amusement.

Those who deny His beautiful names and lofty attributes do not revere Him properly. They deny His hearing, sight, will, choice, and elevation above His creation. They deny that He speaks to His creation in whatever way He pleases. They deny His absolute power and consider events unconnected to His power, will, and creation. They make both good and

evil contingent upon the actions of His slaves. They claim His slaves create whatever they will, regardless of the Lord's will. This implies that in His kingdom, matters which He does not will take place and those which He does will do not take place. Exalted is Allah! He is high above the statements made by those resembling the Magians.

Some allege that He punishes people for something they neither did nor had any free will to do. They, too, do not revere Him properly. They claim that the actions were entirely the doing of the Lord. This implies that He punishes people for what He has forced upon them and that He can force them more than any other creature can do so.

Every human knows it would be despicable for a master to compel his slave to act and then punish the slave for it. How could the Most Merciful, the Wisest Judge, the Supremely Just, ever force His slave into doing something without any choice and then inflict eternal punishment? Exalted is Allah, high above that. This is more offensive than the claim of those resembling the Magians. Neither of them reveres Allah properly.

The Lord is not properly revered by those who associate Him with filth, sewers, and places unbefitting of His remembrance. These people deem Him to be everywhere rather than established upon His Throne:

﴿ ... إِلَيۡهِ يَصۡعَدُ ٱلۡكَلِمُ ٱلطَّيِّبُ وَٱلۡعَمَلُ ٱلصَّٰلِحُ يَرۡفَعُهُۥۚ ... ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ١٠)

﴿…To Him ascend all good words, and righteous deeds exalt them...﴾ *(Fâṭir 35: 10)*

The angels ascend to Him, as does *ar-Rooḥ*,[213] and they descend from Him as well:

﴿ يُدَبِّرُ ٱلۡأَمۡرَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ ثُمَّ يَعۡرُجُ إِلَيۡهِ ... ﴿٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٥)

﴿He governs all things from heaven to earth, then everything will ascend to Him…﴾ *(as-Sajdah 32: 5)*

These people have taken from Him all His dominion, and they believe Him to be everywhere that a human being or even an animal would detest being.

Allah is not properly revered by those who deny His love, mercy, compassion, pleasure, anger, and wrath. They deny His wisdom, which is the ultimate good intended by His actions. They deny His actions and reject the notion that He acts at will. They consider His actions independent occurrences that are not connected with Him.

These people deny:

- He comes and goes Himself.
- He is established on His Throne.
- He spoke to Moosâ on Mount Sinai.
- He will come on the Day of Resurrection to decide between His slaves.
- He has done these things Himself.
- His other actions and perfect qualities.

At the same time, they claim to revere Him properly by denying these matters!

Those who attribute to Him a wife or child or believe that He dwells in His creation or He is all that exists do not properly revere Him.

Those who claim He has raised the reputation of the enemies of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and his household and limited kingship and caliphate to them do not properly revere Him. They allege that He has debased those loyal to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and his family, humiliated

them, and afflicted them with disgrace. This is the highest insult to the Lord – glorified is He above the statements of the *Râfiḍah* (Shiites).

This view is derived from what Jews and Christians claimed about the Lord of the Worlds. They alleged that He (Allah) sent an oppressive king who claimed prophethood for himself and persistently lied about what He commanded and forbade. He (this king) thereby abrogated the Sharia of His Prophets and Messengers.

The oppressive king exploited his subjects by killing them, taking their wealth, or violating their women, claiming, "Allah has made this lawful for me!" Yet the Lord supported him, answered his supplication, empowered him against his opponents, and proved his truthfulness. None of his enemies was left undefeated. He supported him with His words, actions, and approval and continuously showed his truthfulness. This involves the highest insult and slander of the Lord and His knowledge, wisdom, mercy, and Lordship. Glorified is Allah, high above the statements of the deniers.

Compare this statement and the statement of their brethren from the Râfiḍah. You will find the two views to be, as a poet states:

*As if twins, both suckling milk from the same breast,*
*Both swore in the dark womb, never to separate.*

Allah is not properly revered by those who claim that He would punish those nearest to Him – those who did not disobey Him for the blink of an eye. They say He would admit them into the fiery abode. They claim that He would reward His enemies – those who did not believe in Him for the blink of an eye – and that He would admit them into the abode of bliss. They allege that these matters are equally acceptable to Him, and only the revealed texts deny that (that He will do this). In other words, this situation is impossible only because of the texts, not because it contradicts His wisdom and justice. They do not accept the latter as a valid reason for its impossibility.

Allah (□) condemns in His Book those who consider this a possibility for Him, and He deems this the worst of verdicts:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَٰطِلًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ كَٱلْفُجَّارِ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾ (سورة ص: ٢٧-٢٨)

﴿We have not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in vain. That is what the disbelievers think. So woe to the disbelievers from the fire! Should We equate those who believe and do righteous deeds with those who spread mischief in the land? Or should We equate those who fear Allah with the wicked?﴾ *(Ṣâd 38: 27-28)*

﴿أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱجْتَرَحُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ سَوَآءً مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ ۚ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَخَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ (سورة الجاثية: ٢١-٢٢)

﴿Do those who commit evil deeds think that We will deal with them as We deal with those who believe and do righteous deeds, and that they will be alike in their living and their dying? How ill they judge. Allah created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose, and so that every soul may be requited according to what it earned, and they will not be wronged.﴾ *(al-Jâthiyah 45: 21-22)*

﴿أَفَنَجْعَلُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ كَٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾ (سورة القلم: ٣٥-٣٦)

﴿Are We to treat those who have submitted [in Islam] in the same way as the evildoers? What is the matter with you, that you judge as you do?﴾ *(al-Qalam 68: 35-36)*

The Lord is not properly revered by those who claim that He will not resurrect the dead or send forth those in the graves. They claim He will not gather His creation for a Day on which He:

- Repays the good-doer for his goodness and the evil-doer for his evil;
- Retrieves the rights of the oppressed from their oppressors;
- Honours with the greatest honour those who endured hardship in this world for His sake and pleasure;
- Decides between His slaves' disputes; and
- Proves to the disbelievers that they were indeed liars.

He is not properly revered by those who belittle His commands. They disobey Him, belittle and violate His prohibitions and rights, and trivialize and neglect His remembrance. The same applies to those whose hearts are heedless of Him. They prefer their desires over His pleasure and hold that obeying the creation is more important than obeying Him. For Allah are the leftovers of their hearts, statements, and actions. They give others precedence because they hold them in greater significance. They belittle that He is watching over them, even though they are within His grasp and their forelocks are in His Hand.[214]

These people elevate the creation with their hearts and limbs. They feel shame in front of other people but not in front of Allah. They fear the people, but they do not fear Allah. They deal with the creation in the best possible ways, but if they deal with Allah, they offer Him the most worthless of their possessions.

With their entire heart and strength, they diligently and sincerely serve a person whom they love, prioritizing them over their interests. If destiny aids them, they serve their Lord in a manner that a creature would not accept from another creature like them. They spend from their wealth what

they would be ashamed to offer a creature like them. Do such people properly revere Allah?

Is Allah properly revered by those who grant His enemy (Satan) a share of His exclusive rights, such as veneration, glorification, obedience, humility, compliance, fear, and hope? Even if they shared His exclusive rights with the best of creation, this would be an outrageous transgression and insult to Him. How then can they associate with Him the most hated of creation to Him, the most trivial in His eyes, and the most despicable before Him? After all, he is His truest enemy. Anyone other than Allah is never worshipped except that Satan, in reality, is the one being worshipped. The Most High warns:

﴿ ۞ أَلَمۡ أَعۡهَدۡ إِلَيۡكُمۡ يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ أَن لَّا تَعۡبُدُواْ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمۡ عَدُوّٞ مُّبِينٞ ٦٠ وَأَنِ ٱعۡبُدُونِيۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٞ مُّسۡتَقِيمٞ ٦١ ﴾ (سورة يس: ٦٠-٦١)

﴿Did I not instruct you, O children of Adam, that you should not worship the Satan, for he is to you an avowed enemy, and that you should worship Me, for that is a straight path?﴾ *(Yâ Seen 36: 60-61)*

Even when the polytheists claimed to worship the angels, they were actually worshipping Satan. That was while they imagined that they were worshipping the angels:

﴿وَيَوۡمَ يَحۡشُرُهُمۡ جَمِيعٗا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ لِلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِيَّاكُمۡ كَانُواْ يَعۡبُدُونَ ٤٠ قَالُواْ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِن دُونِهِمۖ بَلۡ كَانُواْ يَعۡبُدُونَ ٱلۡجِنَّۖ أَكۡثَرُهُم بِهِم مُّؤۡمِنُونَ ٤١ ﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٤٠-٤١)

﴿On the Day when He gathers them all together He will say to the angels: Was it you that these people used to worship? They will say: Glory be to You! You are our Close Friend, not they. Rather they used to worship the jinn; most of them believed in them.﴾ *(Saba' 34: 40-41)*

Satan invites the polytheists to worship him by making people believe he is an angel. The same applies to those who worship the sun, moon, and stars. They claim to worship the spirits of these heavenly bodies and that they speak to them and fulfil their needs. For this reason, Satan attends the sunrise and sunset. When the disbelievers prostrate to the sun, they are concurrently prostrating to Satan.

Those who worship the Messiah and his mother are not actually worshipping them but, in fact, worshipping Satan. They are worshipping the one who was pleased to command people to worship ‘Eesâ and his mother. It is the accursed Satan (who commanded this) – may Allah curse him – not (‘Eesâ) the slave of Allah and His Messenger.

Apply all these manifestations to the statement of the Most High:

﴿ ۞ أَلَمۡ أَعۡهَدۡ إِلَيۡكُمۡ يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ أَن لَّا تَعۡبُدُواْ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَۖ ... ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة يس: ٦٠)

﴿Did I not instruct you, O children of Adam, that you should not worship the Satan...﴾ *(Yâ Seen 36: 60)*

Every time the descendants of Adam worship anyone other than Allah, they are worshipping Satan. The worshippers use the worshipped to attain what they want, and the worshipped use the worshipper to be exalted and associated with Allah. This is the greatest joy for Satan:

﴿وَيَوۡمَ يَحۡشُرُهُمۡ جَمِيعٗا يَٰمَعۡشَرَ ٱلۡجِنِّ قَدِ ٱسۡتَكۡثَرۡتُم مِّنَ ٱلۡإِنسِۖ وَقَالَ أَوۡلِيَآؤُهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡإِنسِ رَبَّنَا ٱسۡتَمۡتَعَ بَعۡضُنَا بِبَعۡضٖ وَبَلَغۡنَآ أَجَلَنَا ٱلَّذِيٓ أَجَّلۡتَ لَنَاۚ قَالَ ٱلنَّارُ مَثۡوَىٰكُمۡ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٞ ﴿١٢٨﴾﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١٢٨)

﴿On the Day when He gathers them all together [He will say]: O jinn, you enticed many of humankind. Their friends among humankind will say: Our Lord, we used one other, but now we have reached the appointed term that

You decreed for us. He will say: The fire will be your abode, to dwell therein forever, unless Allah wills otherwise, for your Lord is Most Wise, All-Knowing.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 128)*

This subtly alludes to the secret behind polytheism being the greatest of the major sins before Allah. It explains why it is not forgiven without repentance and why it leads to eternal punishment. It is impermissible and repulsive in itself, not simply because it was expressly prohibited (in the Scripture).

Allah (□) never asked His slaves to worship another deity besides Him. That is impossible as it contradicts His perfect qualities and majestic attributes. How can anyone assume that the One Who alone possesses Lordship, divinity, greatness, and majesty would permit or accept this polytheism? Exalted is Allah, high above such allegations.

# Polytheism and Arrogance Are Contrary to Absolute Obedience to Allah

Polytheism was most contrary to the aim behind Allah creating the creation and issuing them His commands. That made it the greatest of the major sins before Allah. It is similar to arrogance and anything associated with it. Allah (□) created the creation and revealed the Qur'an so that people obey Him alone. Polytheism and arrogance are contrary to it. That is why Allah has forbidden paradise to the polytheists and the arrogant. No one whose heart contains a speck of arrogance will enter paradise.

# Speaking about the Names, Attributes, and Actions of Allah without Knowledge

Speaking about Allah's names, attributes, and actions without knowledge is harmful. He should only be described as He or His Messenger (ﷺ) have described Him. Speaking without knowledge contradicts the wisdom of the One Who owns the creation and issues the commands. It also involves accusations against His Lordship and other qualities.

If this (sin) occurs despite having knowledge, it is stubbornness that is uglier than polytheism. It is a greater crime in Allah's sight. The polytheist who affirms the Lord's qualities is better than the *mu'aṭṭil* who knowingly denies His perfect qualities.

Suppose some people acknowledge that dominion belongs to a king. They accept his dominion and the qualities that earned him that kingdom. However, they associate others with him in some matters to draw nearer to him. Such people are nominally better than those who deny the dominion and the qualities altogether.

This matter is established in everyone's mind and fiṭrah. How can one compare (the gravity of) completely denying the qualities of perfection with adopting an intermediary between the worshipper and the worshipped?

How can one seek nearness to Him by worshipping this intermediary out of exaltation for Him? The disease of denial is fatal and without any cure.

Allah has informed us about the champion of denial, Fir‘awn. He denied what Moosâ (□) told him about his Lord being above the heavens. Fir‘awn ordered (his minister):

﴿ ... يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ ٱبۡنِ لِي صَرۡحًا لَّعَلِّيٓ أَبۡلُغُ ٱلۡأَسۡبَٰبَ ٣٦ أَسۡبَٰبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُۥ كَٰذِبًا ... ٣٧ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٣٦-٣٧)

﴿…O Hâmân, build me a tower, so that I may attain the means of access – access to the heavens, and have a look at the God of Moosâ, for verily I think he is a liar…﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 36-37)*

Shaykh Abul-Ḥasan al-Ash‘ari[215] would use this verse as proof against the mu‘aṭṭil in his books. We have quoted his words elsewhere.[216]

Polytheism and speaking about Allah without knowledge are inseparable from one another. They happen due to innovative beliefs, ignorance of Allah’s attributes, and denial of what He and His Messenger (ﷺ) have informed us about Him. All this is based on ignorance and stubbornness. It has made them the greatest of major sins, even if they are less than disbelief.

Iblees (Satan) loves these innovative beliefs more than the major sins. Some of the salaf maintained that innovation is more beloved to Iblees than sin because people repent from sin but not from innovation.[217]

Iblees boasted:

> I destroyed Adam’s descendants using sins, and they destroyed me by seeking forgiveness and [saying]: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*. When I saw that, I inspired them with deviant desires. They sin and do not repent because they assume they are doing good deeds.

Sinners only harm themselves, but innovators harm everyone. The tribulation of the innovators is grounded in their religion, but the tribulation of the sinners is grounded in their desires. Innovators sit for the people on the straight path of Allah, making them stray from it, but sinners are not like that. Innovators oppose the Lord's attributes of perfection, but sinners do not. Innovators contend what the Messenger (ﷺ) came with, but sinners do not. Innovators hinder people on the road to the hereafter, while sinners travel slowly because of their sins.

# Injustice is One of the Greatest Sins in Allah's Sight

Injustice and transgression contradict the justice upon which the heavens and earth were erected. Allah (□) sent His Messengers and revealed His Books for people to uphold equity. All that has made injustice one of the greatest sins in Allah's sight.

Its degree of seriousness depends on the greatness of the harm involved. One of the greatest acts of injustice is for parents to kill their sinless infant child, fearing there will not be enough money or food for the family. It is so because Allah (□) has set their hearts upon loving the child and showing mercy and compassion. He has particularly granted parents an obvious share of it. Those who kill the parents who brought them into the world are similarly unjust, as are those who kill their relatives.

The varying degrees of killing are based on how despicable (the crime was) and how deserving the victim was of (the killer's) protection and sincerity. Hence, those killing or killed by a Prophet will face the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection.[218] Next are those who killed a ruler or scholar who enjoins justice, invites people to follow Allah's religion, and advises them in their religious affairs.

Allah (□) has determined that the recompense for intentionally killing a believing soul is an eternity in hellfire and His anger, curse, and severe punishment. This punishment is for intentionally killing a believer unless an impediment prevents it. It is agreed that willingly accepting Islam after the killing took place is an impediment.

Does the repentance of a Muslim protect a person who has murdered someone? Imam Aḥmad has reported two views regarding that.

Some state that repentance does not affect the consequences. They view these (consequences) as the rights of a human being (the victim), and the victim did not reclaim them when alive. Someone died due to this injustice and must be repaid in the abode of justice. They state that whatever the heirs took was solely their right. Allah (□) gave them the choice of whether to avenge or forgive.[219] How does the murder victim benefit from the heirs' decision? How does the heirs' avenging compensate the victim for the injustice?

This view is the more correct one on the matter. The heirs' revenge does not dismiss the rights of the murder victim. This view is one of the two held by the companions of Imam Aḥmad, Imam ash-Shâfi'i, and others.

Another group claims the victim's rights are dismissed through the murderer's repentance and the heirs' revenge. They point out that repentance wipes out everything before it,[220] and the legislative punishment for the sin committed has been upheld. They argue that repentance erases the effects of disbelief and sorcery, greater sins than murder, so how can it not erase the effect of murder? Allah (□) accepted the repentance of those who killed His cherished slaves. He even made them the best of His slaves. He also gave those who burned His cherished slaves and forced them to abandon their religion the chance to repent. (They point out that) the Most High indicates:

﴿۞ قُلۡ يَٰعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسۡرَفُواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡ لَا تَقۡنَطُواْ مِن رَّحۡمَةِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغۡفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًاۚ ... ٥٣﴾ (سورة الزُّمَر: ٥٣)

﴿Say [Allah says]: O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning greatly], do not despair of the mercy of Allah, for verily Allah forgives all sins…﴾ *(az-Zumar 39: 53)*

This verse refers to the penitent, and it includes disbelief and everything less than it. How can a person repent from sins and still be punished for them after repentance? They claim that that is impossible in Allah's Sharia and recompense.

They point out that the (murderer's) surrender (to the heirs or guardian) denotes repentance. Since the murderer cannot surrender to the murder victim, Sharia has appointed the victim's guardian as their representative. It dictates that surrendering to the guardian instead of the victim is like surrendering owed wealth to an inheritor instead of the (deceased) owner.

A proper analysis of this matter concludes that murder involves three rights: Allah's right, the victim's right, and the guardian's right. Suppose the murderer regrets the crime and willingly surrenders to the guardian out of the fear of Allah and with sincere repentance. In that case, Allah's right is dismissed via repentance. The guardian's right is also dismissed via (the choice of) avenging, settlement or forgiveness.[221] Thereafter, Allah reclaims the remaining right of the murder victim on the Day of Resurrection from His righteous, penitent slave. There He reconciles the two without neglecting the victim's rights or the offender's repentance.

There is a difference of opinion over the issue of wealth. One group believes that the person who returns owed wealth to the inheritors is acquitted of their responsibility in the hereafter, just as they become acquitted in this world.

The other group claims the opposite. They argue that retribution will occur on the Day of Resurrection for the individual wronged by the usurpation. The victim has not been compensated for the injustice by the inheritors receiving it on their behalf. The victim was deprived of its benefit for their entire life, and they died without benefiting from it. This injustice was not compensated for, and only the inheritor benefited from this compensation.

Based on this, they believe the wealth would have been transferred to several heirs. So this entitles them all to demand their share of this reimbursement. The usurper is obliged to pay them all since they are the rightful inheritors. A group of the companions of Imam Mâlik and Imam Aḥmad holds this view.

Our Shaykh[222] holds a more nuanced view – one between the two groups. Suppose the person who died was able to demand and retrieve the wealth but did not do so before death. In that case, the person's inheritors have the right to demand it in the hereafter or this world. Suppose the person who died was unable to demand and retrieve it and was unjustly denied it. In that case, they are entitled to demand it in the hereafter.

This nuance is brilliant. Suppose the oppressor has used up the wealth of the deceased individual, meaning it cannot be retrieved. In that case, it makes this (wealth) like someone's slave that a murderer has killed or someone's house that another has burned down, or someone's food and drink that another has consumed. Only those entitled to inherit are wronged by something like this – and the right to demand belongs to the one whose property was squandered.

If this usurped wealth was an estate, land, or any other item belonging to the deceased, this is the heirs' property. The usurper is obligated to hand it over to them immediately. Suppose the usurper does not hand over the usurped item to the heirs. In that case, the inheritors can demand it in this world, and Allah can demand it in the hereafter.

This issue is truly serious. It means that wealth will be demanded in both worlds. If shared wealth is usurped, every shareholder is entitled to demand their rights from the usurper. Suppose an endowment was usurped and a community's rights were consequently violated. In that case, everyone involved is entitled to demand their rights from the usurper on the Day of Resurrection. No group has priority in this over others – and Allah knows best.

# The Great Harms of Murder

The harm of murder is massive. Allah (ﷻ) mentions:

﴿مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنَّهُۥ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًۢا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۚ ... ﴿٣٢﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣٢)

﴿Because of that We ordained for the Children of Israel that if any one killed a person – unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading mischief in the land – it would be as if he killed all humankind, and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all humankind…﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 32)*

Many people are confused about the meaning here. They say that it is known that the sin of the one who killed a hundred souls is greater before Allah than the sin of the one who killed a single soul. This statement stems from their assumption that the analogy referred to the sin's size and punishment. The wording does not imply that, and similarity existing between two things does not necessitate identical rulings:

﴿كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٤٦﴾﴾ (سورة النازعات: ٤٦)

﴿On the Day they see it, it will be as if they had remained [in this world] no more than an afternoon [of a day] or the morning thereof.﴾ *(an-Nâzi'ât 79: 46)*

﴿ ... كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍۚ ... ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأحقاف: ٣٥)

﴿…On the Day when they see the punishment of which they were warned, it will be as if they had not remained [in this world] for longer than an hour of a day…﴾ *(al-Aḥqâf 46: 35)*

This verse does not necessitate that their stay in this world was for that short time.

Similarly, 'Uthmân reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Those who pray *'ishâ'* (the late evening obligatory prayer) in congregation, it is as if they have stood (in prayer) for half the night. Those who pray fajr in congregation, it is as though they have stood the entire night.» (Muslim)

This wording means in addition to 'ishâ', as the other report clarifies.[223]

The hadith reported by Abu Ayyoob al-Anṣâri explains this more clearly:

«The fast of Ramadan, followed by fasting six days in Shawwâl, is like fasting the full year.» (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«Those who recite the soorah ﴿Say: He, Allah, is One...﴾ *(al-Ikhlâṣ 112: 1-4)* – it is as if they have recited one-third of the Qur'an.» (A reliable hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi and Aḥmad)[224]

It is known that the doer of these things does not reach the reward of the one he is being compared to, making them equal in worth. If the rewards were identical, someone who prayed ‘ishâ’ and fajr in congregation would gain nothing from standing at night (in prayer) but exhaustion.

After faith, no one is gifted anything better than understanding Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). That is the bounty of Allah that He grants to whomever He wills.

What is the point of comparing a single soul’s killer with one who murders the entire humanity?

There are multiple points to explain in response to this inquiry:

1. Each has sinned against Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and opposed His command, and each will be severely punished. Both have earned Allah’s curse and anger and deserve to remain eternally in hellfire. The only disparity is the degree of punishment. The sin incurred by someone who killed a Prophet, a just ruler, or an upright scholar who instructs the people is not equal to the sin of killing an ordinary layperson of less significance.
2. Each of them equally deserves to be killed.
3. Each of them has equally dared to spill blood unlawfully. Someone who kills a soul without due right, simply for corruption in the land, or to take the victim’s wealth, is prepared to kill anyone they can. This makes the murderer an enemy of humanity.

The person is also labelled a killer, an impious person, an oppressor, and a sinner. This applies irrespective of whether one person or all of humanity was killed.

An-Nu‘mân ibn Basheer reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The believers are like a single body in mutual love, mercy and compassion. Whenever one of its limbs suffers, the entire body responds

with sleeplessness and fever.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

When the murderer destroys a part of this body, it is as if it has been entirely destroyed. That is in addition to the pain in all its limbs. Whoever harms a single believer has effectively harmed all the believers, and harming all the believers entails harming all of humanity. That is because Allah (□) pardons humanity simply because of the believers among them. Harming a guard means also harming those guarded.

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«No soul is killed unjustly, without right, without the first son of Adam being responsible for a share of its blood, for he was the first to initiate the practice of murder.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

This threat never came regarding the first fornicator, thief, or drinker of intoxicants. Only the first of the polytheists may deserve this more than the first murderer for being the first to initiate the practice of polytheism. For this reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) saw ‘Amr ibn Luḥay al-Khuzâ‘i receiving the severest punishment in the hellfire, for he was the first to change the religion of Ibrâheem. (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Most High warns:

﴿ ... وَلَا تَكُونُوٓاْ أَوَّلَ كَافِرِۭ بِهِۦۖ ... ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٤١)

﴿…and do not be the first to disbelieve therein…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 41)*

Those after you may follow your example, and the sin of their disbelief will fall upon you. The ruling is similar for anyone who initiates an evil practice and is followed in it.

Ibn ‘Abbâs narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«On the Day of Resurrection, the one slain will grab the slayer by the head and forelock and bring him forward. The victim’s (own) jugular vein will be

gushing blood, and the victim will say: My Lord! Ask him why he killed me!

They mentioned repentance to Ibn ‘Abbâs, so he recited this verse:

﴿ وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا ... ﴿٩٣﴾ ﴾

(سورة النساء: ٩٣)

﴿But whoever kills a believer deliberately, his punishment will be hell, to abide therein forever…﴾ *(an-Nisâ’ 4: 93)*

He pointed out: This verse was not abrogated or exchanged. Where is his repentance mentioned?» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mâjah, and an-Nasâ’i with an authentic chain of narration; at-Tirmidhi graded it reliable)

Nâfi‘ narrates:

Ibn ‘Umar looked at the Kaaba one day and exclaimed: How grand and sanctified you are. Yet, to Allah, the believer has greater sanctity than you.[225]

Jundab reports:

The first part of a human being to spoil is the stomach. Whoever can refrain from eating anything impure should do so. Whoever can avoid being barred from paradise by a handful of blood spilt unlawfully should also do so.[226]

Ibn ‘Umar reported that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«A Muslim remains comfortably within his religion as long as he does not spill blood unlawfully.» (Bukhari)

Imam Bukhari records from Ibn ‘Umar:

One of the dilemmas that cannot be escaped by those who got themselves into it is the spilling of blood unlawfully without due right.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Abusing a Muslim is a flagrant sin, and fighting him is disbelief.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Do not become disbelievers after me, hacking away at each other’s necks.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Those who kill someone given a treaty of security (by the Muslims) will not smell the fragrance of paradise, and its fragrance can certainly be detected from a distance of forty years (travel).» (Bukhari)

This punishment is for killing an enemy of Allah that was granted a promise of security. So what punishment is to be expected for killing His believing slave? A woman entered the hellfire because of a cat that she had locked away until it died from hunger and thirst. The Prophet (ﷺ) saw her in the hellfire being scratched on her face and chest by the cat. (Bukhari and Muslim) What punishment is expected for someone who imprisons believers until they die if they have not committed a crime?[227]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Killing a believer is more grievous before Allah than the annihilation of the whole world.» (Recorded by an-Nasâ’i; authenticated by al-Albâni)

# The Great Harms of Fornication

The harm of fornication is one of the greatest harms. It destabilizes the world's structure that requires preserving lineage, safeguarding chastity, protecting sanctity, and preventing anything that causes the greatest enmity between people: a person violating another's wife, daughter, sister or mother. Based on this reason, the greatness of its harm is second only to murder.

For this same reason, Allah (ﷻ) has coupled them together directly in His Book. As mentioned previously, his Messenger (ﷺ) has also done so in his Sunnah.

Allah (ﷻ) emphasizes its prohibition:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدۡعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقۡتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفۡسَ ٱلَّتِي حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا يَزۡنُونَۚ وَمَن يَفۡعَلۡ ذَٰلِكَ يَلۡقَ أَثَامٗا ٦٨ يُضَٰعَفۡ لَهُ ٱلۡعَذَابُ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ وَيَخۡلُدۡ فِيهِۦ مُهَانًا ٦٩ إِلَّا مَن تَابَ ... ٧٠﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦٨-٧٠)

﴿Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah; and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of justice; and who do not commit fornication or adultery – for whoever does any of these things will receive the punishment. The punishment will be doubled for

them on the Day of Resurrection, and they will abide therein disgraced forever, except those who repent…﴾ *(al-Furqân 25: 68-70)*

He has likened fornication to polytheism and killing a soul. He has deemed their recompense eminently more severe and lasting (unless the offender makes amends through repentance, faith, and righteous deeds).

﴿ وَلَا تَقۡرَبُواْ ٱلزِّنَىٰٓۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةٗ وَسَآءَ سَبِيلٗا ٣٢ ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٢)

﴾Do not approach fornication [or adultery], for it is shameful, an abominable way indeed.﴿ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 32)*

Allah (□) informs us that fornication is immorality in and of itself. That means it is extremely repulsive to the extent that every mind abhors it. Even some animals hate it!

'Amr ibn Maymoon al-Awdi mentions:

> During the [pre-Islamic] period of ignorance, I saw a male monkey commit adultery with a female monkey. The other monkeys then gathered around and stoned them to death.[228]

The Mighty and Majestic has informed us that it is ultimately a truly evil way. It is a path to death, ruin, and poverty in this world. It also leads to punishment, disgrace, and torment in the hereafter.

Marrying the father's wife is even more repulsive, and He has made it even more dispraised:

﴿ ... إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةٗ وَمَقۡتٗاۖ وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ٢٢ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ٢٢)

﴾…It was shameful and odious, an abominable custom indeed.﴿ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 22)*

He has made a person's success contingent upon safeguarding the private parts. That means success cannot be attained without it:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ ٱللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَوٰةِ فَٰعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْعَادُونَ ﴿٧﴾﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ١-٧)

﴿The believers have indeed attained true success, those who humble themselves in their prayers, who turn away from all that is vain [of words and deeds], who are active in giving zakat, and who restrain their carnal desires, except with their wives or any slave women they may own, for then they are free of blame. But whoever seeks anything beyond that, such are the transgressors.﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 1-7)*

This verse implies three matters. Those who do not guard their private parts are unsuccessful; they are blamed and transgressors. They miss out on success, earn the label of 'transgressor', and become blameworthy. Resisting and enduring the burn of lust is lighter than a fraction of this.

Similarly, Allah (□) has dispraised the human being for being overanxious in nature and not being patient in ease and difficulty. Instead, a person becomes stingy and withholds money during times of ease; likewise, a person panics during hardship. The only exceptions are those who are saved and exempted from this category (of transgressors) in His creation:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ فَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْعَادُونَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة المعارج: ٢٩-٣١)

﴿Who restrain their carnal desires, except with their wives or any slave women they may own, for then they are free of blame – but whoever seeks anything beyond that, such are the transgressors.﴾ *(al-Ma'ârij 70: 29-31)*

Since fornication begins with a glance, Allah commands us to look away to safeguard our private parts. Most accidents begin with a glance,

just as most fires begin with a spark. It is a glance, then a thought, then a step, then a sin. It has been said that those who safeguard these four – glances, thoughts, utterances, and steps – will have protected their religion.

People themselves should keep a watch on these four doors. They should remain vigilantly stationed upon these trenches, for the enemies enter through them and destroy everything they seize.

# Gateways to Sin

The most common gateways that lead to sinning are: glances, thoughts, utterances, and steps. We will discuss each of these topics separately as befits this subject.

## Glances

The glance is the scout and messenger of lust. Safeguarding it is the key to safeguarding the private parts. Those who allow themselves to gaze (at whatever they like) subject themselves to destruction.

Buraydah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Do not give a second look because while you are not to blame for the first, you have no right to the second.» (Recorded by Abu Dâwood, at-Tirmidhi, Aḥmad, and al-Bayhaqi; graded reliable by al-Albâni)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said that the glance is one of the poisoned arrows of Iblees. If a man refuses to look at a woman's beauty, Allah will instil

sweetness in his heart until the Day he meets Him. (This is a paraphrase of a hadith.)[229]

‘Ubâdah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«Lower your gazes, and guard your private parts.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, Ibn Ḥibbân, Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, al-Kharâ’iṭi, and al-Bayhaqi)[230]

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Beware of sitting by the roadways.

They said: O Messenger of Allah! These are where we meet. We cannot do without them.

He replied: If you must do this, give the roadway its due right.

They asked: What is its due right?

He replied: To lower your gazes, refrain from harming (others), and return someone’s greeting.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The unrestrained glance triggers all the misfortunes that befall a human being. A glance generates a thought, the thought generates an idea, the idea generates a desire, the desire generates a decision, and it strengthens and becomes determination. This makes the act inevitable unless something impedes it. It was said that persevering in looking away is easier than bearing the pain of what follows.

*Every accident began with a single glance,*
*Just as most fires are from belittling what sparked.*
*How many glances pierced into the hearts,*
*Like arrows that from the bowstrings embarked.*
*So long as a person inspects every fair lady’s arrival,*
*Then on that cliff’s edge he risks his own survival,*
*He delights his eye by agonizing his soul,*
*Unwelcome are thrills that leave a devastating toll.*

One of the harms of looking is that it generates sorrows, sighs, and grief. People see what they can neither attain nor abstain from, which is utter torture. You see what you cannot refrain from – not even a part of – and yet you are unable to attain it.

*And when you deploy your sights to scout for your heart,*
*Then each scene will only exhaust you more than the start.*
*You saw what you can never have in its entirety,*
*Nor for a part of that could you abstain patiently.*

This stanza requires an explanation. The poet intends to make you understand that you are incapable of attaining any portion of it. His words – what you can never have – imply that we cannot attain everything (we desire).

How many people have released their glances until they fell victim to them?

*O looker who ceased not unleashing your gaze,*
*Until you fell murdered between the displays.*

Here is some of my poetry:

*He grew bored of safety, so he unleashed his glances,*
*Chasing after dumps pretending to be beautiful romances.*
*At every turn, he was stalked by his glance,*
*Until he fell prey amidst that fatal dance.*

Amazingly, the onlooker's glance is an arrow that does not reach the one being looked at. Yet, it dominates the heart of the onlooker.

Following is one of my poems:

*O you who toils to let the glance-arrows fly,*
*You are the one slain of your shot, so avoid the bull's eye!*
*O you who, for some healing, on his sights he relies,*
*Restrain your messenger before he brings back your demise.*

What is more amazing is that glances wound the heart. Yet the person adds one wound to another and is not deterred by the resultant pain.

I have also written the following verses of poetry about this:

*You continued repeating glance after glance,*
*Gawking at each man or woman of beauty.*
*You thought that would cure your every wound,*
*While, in fact, it was an injury on top of injury.*
*You ruined your eyes' gaze with stares and tears,*
*Leaving your heart as if shredded with shears.*

It has been said that imprisoning the glances is easier than an eternity of sorrow.

## Thoughts

Thoughts are more difficult to control. They are the starting point for good and evil, generating intention, zeal, and determination. Those who safeguard their thoughts have grabbed themselves by the reins and conquered their desires. The carnal self and its desires have defeated those overcome by their wayward thoughts. Those who underestimate their thoughts will inevitably be led to their doom.

Thoughts continue presenting themselves to the heart until they become false wishes:

﴿ ... كَسَرَابٍۭ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ ٱلظَّمْـَٔانُ مَآءً حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَهُۥ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْـًٔا وَوَجَدَ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ فَوَفَّىٰهُ حِسَابَهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة النور: ٣٩)

﴿…like a mirage in a desert plain. The thirsty man thinks it is water until, when he reaches it, he finds it to be nothing. But he finds [the punishment

of] Allah waiting, thus Allah will requite him in full, for Allah is swift in reckoning.﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 39)*

Those with the lowliest souls and the most debased ambitions are content with ignoring reality for wishes of fantasy, seeking them out, and adorning themselves with them. By Allah, this is the capital of the bankrupt and the market of the indolent. It is the nutrition of the deprived souls who are satisfied with visiting an image and attaining an illusion. They are not interested in reality.

This condition is the most harmful for a human being. It sprouts from incompetence and laziness, and it generates negligence and regret. When the dreamers are unable to pursue the tangible reality, they construct it within their hearts, hug it tight and pull it close. They are satisfied with this fictitious image their imaginations have produced. Nothing can help such individuals. Their example is that of a hungry and thirsty person who simply imagines food and drink but neither eats nor drinks.

Entertaining such (thoughts) and eliciting them indicates that the self is debased. The self's nobility, purity, and loftiness are only acquired after ridding it of every fantasy. One refuses even to think about it and sees oneself as above this.

Thoughts about anything should essentially be of four types:

1. Thoughts that elicit benefit in this life.
2. Thoughts that repel harm in this life.
3. Thoughts that elicit one's welfare in the hereafter.
4. Thoughts that repel harm in the hereafter.

One should limit one's thoughts, ideas, and ambitions to these four types. If it is feasible to combine all of them, this is ideal. If these thoughts overcrowd the mind because of what each necessitates, one should

prioritize what is important that one fears missing over what is unimportant that one does not fear missing.

Two other categories remain: important matters that should not be missed and unimportant matters that can be missed. Each of these needs to be prioritized, and this is where there is hesitation and confusion.

Someone who gives precedence to the important risks missing what is less important. Someone who gives precedence to something less important may find themselves unable to attend to what is important. This particularly applies to two matters that cannot be combined. Attending one means missing out on the other. Here is where being intelligent, knowledgeable, and experienced is vital. From here, those who were raised became raised, those who succeeded became successful, and those who failed became failures. Many you consider to have sharp minds and deep knowledge actually prefer the unimportant that can be missed over the important that cannot be missed. You will not find anyone who has evaded this completely; some are less susceptible, while others are more so.[231]

The verdict here is determined by the ultimate fundamental objective behind destiny and the Sharia, which the creation and command embody. The meaning here is that one should prefer the greater benefit, even at the expense of the lesser benefit. One should embrace the lesser harm to avoid the greater harm. One should pass up a beneficial matter in favour of something of greater benefit. One should endure harm if it avoids more serious harm.

The thoughts of the sensible should never venture beyond that. This is what legislation came with, and the welfare of this world and the hereafter is only upheld by this. The most superior, most beneficial thoughts are those entertained for Allah and the abode of the hereafter.

Thoughts for Allah (□) are of different types:

1. One should think about the revealed verses and try to understand them and their meaning. That is why Allah (□) revealed them. They were not revealed to be recited only. The recitation is only a means of achieving the goal of understanding the Qur'an. One of the salaf indicated, "Allah revealed the Qur'an to be acted upon. Yet, people settled for only its recitation as the action."

2. One should think about His observable signs, reflect on them, and become acquainted with them through His names, attributes, wisdom, excellence, kindness, and generosity. He urges His slaves to think about His signs, ponder deeply over them, and understand them. He has also dispraised those who are heedless of them.

3. One should think about His favours, bounty, and blessings. One should ponder about the creation with all its blessings, and the expanse of His mercy, forgiveness, and forbearance.

   These thoughts drive the heart to know Allah, love Him, fear Him, and have hope in Him. Continually thinking about this, along with dhikr, completely moulds the heart into knowing and loving (Allah).

4. One should consider the faults and flaws of one's carnal self and actions. These thoughts are also greatly beneficial, for they open the doors to every good. They effectively overcome one's base desires, meaning the soul thrives in peace this way, without contention or opposition. In turn, the heart comes to life, possesses full authority in its kingdom, and sends forth its soldiers and ambassadors for its betterment.

5. One should think about the task and obligation of each hour and direct one's entire focus to it. The wise are vigilant of their time, knowing that wasting it squanders all that benefits them. Benefiting is entirely contingent upon time. If one squanders it, one will never retrieve it again.

   Imam ash-Shâfi'i mentions:

> I befriended the Sufis, and the only benefit I gained from them was two statements:
>
> Time is a sword; either cut it, or it will cut you.
>
> Either you busy yourself with the truth, or it will busy you with falsehood.

A human being is his lifespan in reality. This qualifies a person to live in perpetual and eternal bliss or a constricted life of severe punishment. Life passes faster than the clouds, and one's actual lifespan amounts to however much time was for Allah and by Allah. Anything else is not calculated as part of one's life. Even if one lived, it was like an animal, spending time negligently, pursuing desires and false wishes. The best of this person's life was the time spent in slumber and lethargy, making death better than such a life.

Despite being in prayer, one gets nothing except what one understood of it.[232] Therefore, one certainly has no lifespan apart from what was by Allah and for Allah.

Aside from such thoughts, there are either satanic whispers, false wishes or deceitful tricks similar to the thoughts of the mentally ill, drunk, intoxicated or insane. When reality is unveiled, their personified condition would say:

> *If only my station in the resurrection was with you,*
> *After what I have found. I squandered my days.*
> *For ages, it was just a wish my self did construe,*
> *Today, it is clear – false dreams had me in a maze.*

Passing thoughts do not harm, but evoking and entertaining them does harm. Thoughts are like passers-by on the road. If you ignore them and do not invite them, they will leave you alone and depart. If you invite them, they will bewitch you with their words, tricks, and delusions. They are the

most pleasant thing to a lethargic carnal self and the most intolerable thing to a noble, heavenly, and reassured self.

Allah (□) has installed two opposing states of the self within the human being: *an-Nafs al-Ammârah* (the 'evil-prompting self') and *an-Nafs al-Muṭma'innah* (the 'at-peace self'). Whatever pleases one cannot be tolerated by the other, and whatever one enjoys is painful for the other. Nothing is more burdensome for the self that prompts evil than working for Allah and preferring His pleasure over its desires, though nothing benefits it more. Likewise, nothing is more burdensome on the 'at-peace self' than working for anyone other than Allah and responding to the call of desires, for nothing harms it more.

Angels accompany the 'at-peace self' on the heart's right side, whereas Satan is with the 'evil-prompting self' on its left. Both continue to battle without end until worldly life concludes. Every falsehood sides with Satan and the evil-prompting self, and every truth sides with the angel when the self is at peace; the upper hand in the battle changes from one to the other.

Victory is with patience, so the patient ones persevere, remain stationed, and have taqwâ. The outcome favours them in this world and the hereafter. Allah (□) has decreed a judgement that will never be changed: the outcome (victory) is for taqwâ and the people with taqwâ.

The heart is a clean slate, and thoughts are scratches carved into it. How can it befit a sensible person to allow the carvings on the slate to be a lie, an illusion, trickery, false wishes or a fictitious mirage? What wisdom, knowledge or guidance can be carved alongside these etches? Even if a person wishes to carve these (beneficial things) onto the slate of the heart, it is like writing beneficial knowledge in a place saturated with unbeneficial writings. If the heart is not emptied of lowly thoughts, beneficial thoughts will never settle there, for they only settle in vacant locations.

A poet states:

*Desiring her came to me before I knew desire,*
*It met a vacant heart and became fixed therein.*

Based on this point, many masters of self-discipline have built their discipline upon safeguarding their thoughts. They do not allow a thought to enter their hearts. They want their hearts to become vacant eventually, ready for inspiration and to behold the realities of the heavenly imports.

These people safeguarded one thing but overlooked many others. They emptied their hearts and prevented any thought from visiting them, making their hearts completely void of everything. When Satan found these hearts empty, he planted falsehood there, presenting it in moulds that deceived them into thinking it was the noblest, finest thing. He made them accept that instead of thoughts of substance that nourish knowledge and guidance.

Whenever a heart is emptied of all thought, Satan arrives and fills this void with whatever suits its owner's nature. Since he cannot occupy such hearts with lowly thoughts, he makes their owners inclined to lose their will to worship. Individuals cannot attain success and welfare without this will being superior in their hearts. That means the will to comply with Allah's religious injunctions that He loves and is pleased with, learning their details and upholding them, and mixing with the creation to ensure their implementation.

Satan diverts them from that, making them leave it because they are disinterested in worldly thoughts and what evokes them. He makes them believe that reaching their full potential lies in emptying (the heart of) everything. What a far-fetched wish that is. In contrast, perfection lies in filling the heart with wishes and thoughts about how to please the Lord and help others please Him.

The most complete people are those most preoccupied with these thoughts and motives. The most deficient people are most preoccupied with thoughts and motives that revolve around their desires, whatever they may be. Allah is the source of strength.

Look at ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (□). His thoughts crowded one another regarding the pleasure of his Lord, and perhaps he would (even) entertain them during his prayer. At times, he would prepare his army while in prayer, and in doing so, he combined jihad and prayer. Combining multiple types of worship in a single act is a difficult and noble practice. Only people with pure hearts, deep knowledge, and high ambitions can sustain it. Such people perform an act of worship and come away with a multitude of worship. But that is the bounty of Allah, which He grants to whom He wills.

## Speech

Safeguarding utterances means not permitting a wasted word to escape. One only speaks about what will benefit one’s religion and bring profit. Whenever one wishes to utter a word, one considers: Does this word contain any profit and benefit? If it does not contain any profit, one refrains from uttering it. If it does contain profit, one considers: Will it make me miss (the chance to utter) a word more profitable than this? In such a case, one does not waste this (opportunity) with a less profitable word.

If you wish to know what is in the heart, enquire about the tongue’s movements. They will reveal what the heart contains regardless of whether its owner consents.

Yaḥyâ ibn Mu‘âdh mentions:

> Hearts are like kettles that boil with their contents, and tongues are their serving spoons. Be attentive to how people speak, for their tongues will surely serve you with what their hearts contain, be it sweet, sour, fresh, salty or otherwise. Their tongues are but the ladles that acquaint you with the taste of their hearts.[233]

In other words, just as you taste with your tongue the food in the pot to find out what it contains, from the tongues of others, you taste what their hearts contain. Their tongues give you the taste of what their hearts contain, just as your tongue gives you the taste of what the pot contains.

In a marfoo‘ hadith reported by Anas, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«A person’s faith does not become upright until the heart becomes upright, and the heart does not become upright until the tongue becomes upright.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, and al-Kharâ’iṭi; graded weak by al-Haythami and al-‘Irâqi)

Abu Hurayrah narrated that when the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked about the most common things that admit people into hellfire, he replied:

«The mouth and the private parts.» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*], at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Ḥibbân, al-Ḥâkim, Ibn Mâjah, and al-Baghawi with a good chain of narration; at-Tirmidhi graded it authentic)

Mu‘âdh asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the act that admits into paradise and keeps one far from hellfire. He informed him about the crux of the matter, its central column, and its pinnacle.

«The Prophet (ﷺ) then said: Shall I inform you of the regulator of all this?

Mu‘âdh replied: Of course, O Messenger of Allah.

He grabbed his tongue and said: Restrain it from (harming) you.

He asked: Are we liable for what we speak?

He replied: May your mother be bereaved of you, O Mu‘âdh. Does anything other than their tongues throw people on their faces (or on their noses)?» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mâjah; at-Tirmidhi graded it authentic)

Incredibly, humans find it easy to guard themselves against eating the unlawful, injustice, fornication, theft, drinking wine, looking at the

unlawful, and so on. However, they find it difficult to guard themselves against the activity of the tongue. Sometimes, you find people known for their religiosity, asceticism, and worship, uttering words without thinking, incurring Allah's wrath. One of these words will send them further down than the distance between the east and the west. (Bukhari and Muslim)

How often do you see people who cautiously avoid indecency and injustice? Yet their tongues tear away at the honour of the living and the dead, and they have no care for what they utter.[234] The following report is an illustration of this. Jundub ibn 'Abdullâh reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«A man said: By Allah, Allah will not forgive that person.

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, responded: Who is the one who swears about Me (saying) that I will not forgive that person? I have forgiven him and annulled all your deeds.» (Muslim)

This worshipper, who worshipped Allah for as long as He willed, had all his actions voided by a single word. Abu Hurayrah narrated the hadith and stated, "He uttered a word that caused his worldly life and hereafter to collapse." (Recorded by Aḥmad and Abu Dâwood with a good chain of narration)

Abu Hurayrah also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«A person may inadvertently say something that pleases Allah, for which He gives immense rewards. A person may inadvertently say something that angers Allah, for which He will hurl him into hellfire.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

According to another version:

«A person may utter a word without thinking and consequently fall into the fire of hell further than the distance between the east and the west.» (Muslim)

At-Tirmidhi reported that Bilâl ibn al-Ḥârith al-Muzani narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«One of you would certainly utter a word, not realizing it would please Allah, for which He would record for you His pleasure until the Day you meet Him. Another would certainly utter a word, not realizing it would incur Allah's wrath, for which He would record His wrath until the Day you meet Him.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasâ'i, Ibn Mâjah, Aḥmad, al-Ḥumaydi, and Ibn Ḥibbân with a good chain of narration)

'Alqamah[235] used to say, "How many words did the hadith of Bilâl ibn al-Ḥârith prevent me from [uttering]!"

Anas narrated:

«One of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) died, so another man said: Rejoice with paradise.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) remarked: How can you be sure? Perhaps he spoke about something that did not concern him, or he was stingy over something he could easily have given away.» (Recorded by Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, at-Tirmidhi, aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi, Abu Ya'lâ, and adh-Dhahabi; deemed weak by al-Ḥâfidh al-'Irâqi)[236]

In another wording it is mentioned:

«A young man was martyred on the Day of Uḥud. A stone was found strapped to his stomach from hunger.

His mother wiped the dirt from his face and said: Be delighted with paradise, my son.

The Prophet (ﷺ) remarked: How do you know? Perhaps he used to speak about something that did not concern him or withhold that which did not harm him (to spend).»

Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should say something good or remain silent.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah also narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ):

«Let anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day, who notices something, say something good (about it) or remain silent.» (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«A good Muslim does not pry into the affairs of others.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi with a weak chain)

Sufyân ibn ‘Abdullâh ath-Thaqafi narrated:

«I asked: O Messenger of Allah! Tell me something regarding Islam that I will not (need to) ask anyone about after you.

He replied: Say: I have believed in Allah – and then remain steadfast.

I asked: O Messenger of Allah! What is the greatest thing that you fear for me?

He grabbed his tongue and said: This.» (Muslim)

Umm Ḥabeebah, the wife of the Prophet (ﷺ), narrated that he said:

«All the speech of the descendants of Adam is against them, not for them, except the enjoining of good, the forbidding of evil, or the remembrance of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.» (A sound hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi)

Abu Sa‘eed al-Khudri reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Each morning, all the limbs of a slave condemn the tongue and say: Fear Allah regarding us, for we solely hinge on you. When you become upright, we become upright; if you deviate, we deviate.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭayâlisi, al-Baghawi, Abu Ya‘lâ, and Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ with a reliable chain of narrators)

The salaf used to criticize themselves for remarking that the weather was cold or hot.

> One of the great people of knowledge was seen in a dream. When asked about his condition, he replied: I was stopped for a word I once uttered. I had said: How great is the people's need for rain!
>
> I was asked: How do you know? I know best about the welfare of My slaves.
>
> One of the Companions told his maid-servant: Bring out the food so we may play with it.
>
> Then he said: *Astaghfirullâh*! I have never uttered a word without firmly grasping its reins except for this one. It came out without any reins whatsoever [or something to that effect].

The easiest limb to move is the tongue, yet it evokes the most danger upon the person.

The salaf and later generations differed on whether everything uttered was written or only the good and evil. The more apparent view is the first. One of the salaf said that all the words of Adam's descendants are against them, not for them, except for Allah's mention and whatever relates to it.

Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (□) used to grab hold of his tongue and say, "This is what drove me to destruction."[237]

Words are your prisoners, but once they emerge from your mouth, you become their prisoner – and Allah is by the tongue of every speaker:

﴿مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴿١٨﴾﴾ (سورة ق: ١٨)

﴿Not a word does he utter but there is with him a watcher, ready to record it.﴾ *(Qâf 50: 18)*

The tongue leads to two great blunders. Escaping one (usually) necessitates not escaping the other. They are the blunder of speaking and the blunder of silence. Depending on the circumstances, each can be a greater sin than the other. Those who remain silent about the truth are mute devils, disobedient to Allah, and show-offs. They have compromised (their religion for others) unless they remained silent out of fear for their lives. Those who speak falsehood are talking devils and are also disobedient to Allah. Most creatures either talk too much or keep too silent, and they alternate between these.

The people of moderation, those of the straight path, restrain their tongues from falsehood. They only speak what earns them benefit in the hereafter. You do not find them speaking a wasted word that does not accrue benefit or one that would harm them in the hereafter. A person may come on the Day of Judgement with good deeds like mountains and then find that the tongue has voided them all. Another may come with evil deeds like mountains and then find that the tongue has voided them all through their constant remembrance of Allah and whatever was related to it.

## Steps

Safeguarding our steps means using our feet only for an anticipated reward. If our steps do not lead to an increase in reward, then remaining seated is better. We can transform every lawful matter we step towards into a means of coming closer (to Allah) by intending it for Allah. With that, our steps become an act of closeness.

There are two types of faltering: both the foot and the tongue can falter. These are mentioned together:

﴿ وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمۡشُونَ عَلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ هَوۡنٗا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلۡجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُواْ سَلَٰمٗا ٦٣ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦٣)

﴿The true slaves of the Most Gracious are those who walk humbly and with dignity on the earth and, when the ignorant address them, they say words of peace.﴾ *(al-Furqân 25: 63)*

Allah has described them as being upright in their utterances and their steps, just as He has made a connection between glances and thoughts:

﴿ يَعۡلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ ٱلۡأَعۡيُنِ وَمَا تُخۡفِي ٱلصُّدُورُ ١٩ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ١٩)

﴿Allah knows the stealth of the eyes and all that the hearts conceal.﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 19)*

# The Duty to Guard the Private Parts

We mentioned the above as a prelude to the unlawfulness of indecency and the obligation to safeguard private parts. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said that the most common things that admit people into hellfire are the mouth and the private parts. Bukhari,[238] at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Ḥibbân, al-Ḥâkim, Ibn Mâjah, and al-Baghawi recorded different versions of this hadith.

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«It is only lawful to take the life of a Muslim in three cases – the previously married fornicator, a life for a life, and one who forsakes their religion and deserts the (Muslim) community.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

This hadith connects fornication, disbelief, and murder, just like the verse in Soorat al-Furqân and the hadith of 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood (regarding the greatest sins).

The Prophet (ﷺ) began with the most frequently occurring (sins), then those following these. Fornication is more frequent than murder, and murder is more frequent than apostasy. The hadith mentions the sins in order of gravity, from great to greater sins.

The harm of fornication threatens the world's well-being. A woman who fornicates incurs disgrace upon her family, spouse, and relatives. If she becomes pregnant via fornication, she lowers their head (in shame) in front of other people. If she kills her child, she combines both fornication and murder. If she attributes the child to her husband, she would admit to her family a foreign person: one who inherits from them while not being of them; one who sees them (unveiled) and sits alone with them; and one who is (seemingly) related to them while not belonging to them. Many other harmful effects also result from her fornication.

When a man fornicates, it also leads to mixing lineages. It corrupts the married woman and subjects her to neglect and menace. This major sin leads to the ruin of religion and the collapse of worldly life. It also leads to punishment in the graves and hellfire in the hereafter. Take note of how fornication leads to injustice, violations of sanctity, and squandering of rights.

One of the consequences (of fornication) is that it induces poverty, shortens the lifespan, blackens its doer's face, and instils hatred among people.

Another consequence is that it infects the heart, making it ill, that is, if it does not kill it. It elicits worry and grief, distances its doer from the angel, and draws the person nearer to Satan. Nothing after murder is more harmful than this, and hence being killed in the worst, most gruesome manner has been legislated for it.

Had a person been informed that his wife or daughter was killed, he would have found that easier to bear than being told she had fornicated.

«Sa'd ibn 'Ubâdah said: If I saw a man with my wife, I would surely strike him with my sword – not the flat end!

This reached Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), and he said: Look at the amazing protective jealousy of Sa'd. By Allah, I am certainly more jealous than he

is, and Allah is more jealous than I am. Because of that, He has forbidden indecency both openly and in secret.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«No one has more protective jealousy than Allah, and hence He has forbidden indecency openly and privately. No one loves to excuse more than Allah, and hence He has sent the Messengers as bearers of glad tidings and warners. No one loves to be praised more than Allah, and hence He praises Himself.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«Allah becomes protectively jealous, and the believer becomes protectively jealous. The jealousy of Allah results from His slave approaching something He has forbidden.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said in his sermon during the solar eclipse prayer:

«O followers of Muhammad! By Allah! No one has more self-respect than Allah, as He has forbidden that His slaves, male or female, commit adultery (illegal sexual intercourse). O followers of Muhammad! By Allah, if you knew what I know, you would laugh little and weep much.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

In another version, it is reported that he then raised his hands and said:

«O Allah! Have I not conveyed it (the message)?» (Muslim)

In mentioning this major sin in particular, after the eclipse prayer, there is a brilliant secret for those who reflect. The abundance of fornication foretells the demise of the world. It is one of the portents of the Hour, as narrated by Anas:

«I will inform you of something I heard from Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) that nobody would tell you after me. I heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) say: One of the signs of the Hour is being deprived of knowledge, ignorance becoming

widespread, wine being drunk, and fornication becoming widespread. Men will decrease in number and women will increase until fifty women have one man maintaining them.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Whenever fornication becomes widespread, Allah becomes intensely angry with His creation, resulting in punishment on earth.

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood mentions, “When fornication and usury become apparent in a town, Allah authorizes its destruction.”[239]

Mâlik ibn Deenâr relates:

> A scholar from the Children of Israel once saw one of his sons winking at a woman.
>
> He warned him: Be careful, my son.
>
> He fell from his bed and broke his leg, his wife miscarried, and it was said to him: Is this the extent of your anger for Me? I will never bring forth any good from your progeny.[240]

Allah (□) has mentioned three consequences as the legislative punishment for fornication (in *an-Noor 24: 2*):

1. It involves being killed in the most gruesome manner. A lighter application involves a combination of physical punishment by flogging and emotional punishment by being banished from one’s homeland for a year.
2. He has forbidden His slaves from letting compassion for the fornicators prevent them from establishing the prescribed punishment. It was from His mercy and compassion that He legislated this punishment for them. He is more merciful with them than any human being. Yet, His mercy did not prevent Him from legislating this punishment. Hence, compassion should not prevent people from upholding His command.

Even though this applies to all legislative punishments, it particularly applies to punishment for fornication. There is a heightened need to mention it here because the reality is that people's hearts are less harsh towards the fornicator than the thief, slanderer, and drinker of wine. Their hearts sympathize with the fornicator more than with perpetrators of other crimes. People are forbidden from being overtaken by pity and suspending Allah's prescribed punishment.

This sympathy is because this sin is committed by the nobles, the middle class, and the lowly alike. Souls carry the strongest inclination to it. Its participants are many, and it most commonly results from the notion of love. Hearts are disposed to pity the lovers. Many people consider helping them virtuous, even if the relationship is illicit.

Do not be surprised by this matter, for it is accepted by many whom Allah has willed to be (blind followers) like cattle. Mostly those with little common sense and knowledge of religion tell these stories.

This sin is usually performed with mutual consent from both parties, so it does not involve enmity, oppression or hostility that would cause the souls to despise it. It also involves an overwhelming temptation that, when imagined, produces pity that prevents the establishment of legislative punishment.

The above happens due to weak faith. Complete faith constitutes the strength to uphold Allah's command and the mercy to pity the one being punished, making the person congruent with the Lord in both His command and mercy.

3. Allah (□) has commanded that the believers witness their punishment. It should not be given in seclusion where nobody can see it. This punishment is more effective and a wiser form of deterrent.

The legislative punishment for adultery is derived from Allah's punishment for the people of Looṭ (□). He bombarded them with stones because of the comparable indecency of fornication and homosexuality.

Each conflict with Allah's wisdom in His creation and command, for homosexuality contains incalculable harm.

It is better for the one sodomized to be killed than be subjected to it, for it causes such harm that it leaves no hope for any reform. It does away with all his goodness. The earth devours all his modesty, leaving him no longer ashamed before Allah or His creation. The doer's semen poisons his heart and soul as poison affects the body.

There are two views regarding whether the one sodomized can enter paradise, and I heard Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah discussing them.

Those who believe he does not enter paradise base their argument on several matters. One is based on reports from the Prophet (ﷺ). For example, Ibn 'Amr narrated:

«The child born of fornication does not enter paradise.» (Recorded by ad-Dârimi, Aḥmad, an-Nasâ'i, and Ibn Ḥibbân; its chain contains an unknown narrator, but two corroborating reports strengthen it)[241]

They point out that this is the case with an illegitimate child, even though the child has not sinned.[242] They indicate that the child is the result of the evil, carries the filth (of the act), and is expected never to bring about any good due to being conceived through a wicked sperm. If hellfire prioritizes a body nourished with the unlawful, what about the body conceived from unlawful sperm?

They say that the one sodomized is worse, more impudent, and filthier than the children born of fornication. They claim that he is expected never to be guided to any good. He is impeded from it because whenever he does a good act, Allah appoints something to ruin it as a punishment. They say one hardly finds adolescents like these who do not become even worse as adults. They claim he is never guided to beneficial knowledge, righteous actions, or sincere repentance.

We must analyze the matter properly. The one plagued with this tribulation may repent, return (to Allah), and be granted sincere repentance and righteous actions. He may become better in adulthood, replace his sin with good deeds, and wash away its disgrace with various acts of nearness and devotion. He may eventually lower his gaze, safeguard his private parts from the unlawful, and become truthful in his dealings with Allah. If so, he may be forgiven and enter paradise, for undoubtedly Allah forgives all sins. Repentance erases every sin, even associating partners with Allah, killing His Prophets and closest friends, sorcery, disbelief, and the like. So it will not fail to erase this sin.

From the justice of Allah and His bounty, His wisdom has determined that:

«The one who repents from a sin is like the one who did not sin.» (A weak hadith recorded by Ibn Mâjah; it has some corroborating reports)

Regarding those who have repented from polytheism, murder, and adultery, Allah (□) has even guaranteed that He will exchange their sins with good deeds. This general rule applies to anyone who repents from any sin:

﴿۞ قُلۡ يَٰعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسۡرَفُواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡ لَا تَقۡنَطُواْ مِن رَّحۡمَةِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغۡفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًاۚ ... ﴿٥٣﴾﴾ (سورة الزُّمَر: ٥٣)

﴿Say [Allah says]: O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning greatly], do not despair of the mercy of Allah, for verily Allah forgives all sins…﴾ *(az-Zumar 39: 53)*

No sin is excluded from these general terms. The verse applies specifically to those who repent. Suppose the one sodomized becomes worse in adulthood than he was in adolescence. He will not be granted sincere repentance or righteous actions in that case. He cannot rectify what has been missed, revive what has died, or replace his sins with good deeds.

Such a condition prevents the person from being granted a seal at death that will admit him into paradise. This punishment is for his actions. Allah (□) punishes sin with another sin, making the punishment of sins multiply together, just as He rewards a good deed with another good deed.

If you look at the condition of many on their deathbeds, you will find them impeded from a good seal as a punishment for their evil acts.

Al-Ḥâfidh Abu Muhammad ‘Abdul-Ḥaqq ibn ‘Abdur-Raḥmân al-Ishbeeli (may Allah bestow mercy on him) warns us (by these examples:

> An evil end – may Allah protect us from it – has causes, routes, and gates. The greatest is infatuation with this world, ignorance of the hereafter, and insolent breaching of Allah’s boundaries. Sometimes, the human being becomes overwhelmed by a certain type of mistake, a certain kind of sin, a certain aspect of negligence, or a share of insolence. It seizes the person’s heart, captures their mind, extinguishes its light, and sends its veils upon it. As a result, no reminder benefits the person, no exhortation revives him, and perhaps death may befall the person in that state. The person will hear the caller from a distance. However, they will understand neither what is said nor its intent, even if it is repeated without end.
>
> He continues:
>
> It was reported that a supporter of an-Nâṣir was about to die, so his son told him: Say: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*.
>
> He uttered: An-Nâṣir is my master!
>
> The son repeated his statement to him, and he repeated his response. Then he fell unconscious.
>
> He woke up and repeated: An-Nâṣir is my master!
>
> This went on. Whenever someone told him to say: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*, he muttered: An-Nâṣir is my master!

Finally, he said to his son: An-Nâṣir only privileges you by [virtue of] your sword. Kill, kill.

Then he died.

‘Abdul-Ḥaqq also relates:

Someone I know [personally] was told to say: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*.

Instead, he kept saying: Fix this and that in that property, and do this and that with that garden.

Abu Ṭâhir as-Silafi permitted me to tell this story about a man about to die. He was told to say: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*.

He kept saying in Persian *Dah Yazdih*, which means ten in exchange for eleven.

Another was told to say: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*.

He kept saying: What is the way to the public bath of Minjâb?

There is a story behind these words. A man was standing in front of his house, and its door resembled the door of that public bath.

A beautiful girl passed and asked: What is the way to the public bath of Minjâb?

He replied: This is the public bath of Minjâb.

She entered, and he followed her. When she found herself in his house, she realized he had deceived her. She showed him that she was pleased to be with him and added: It would be good for us to have something to enjoy this occasion with and make our stay comfortable.

He told her: I will immediately bring you everything you wish and desire.

He left her without locking the house, gathered the items, and returned to find she had fled. However, she had not taken advantage of him by [stealing] anything. The man fell passionately in love and would constantly mention her. He would walk in the streets and alleyways, saying:

*Perhaps one day, in exhaustion, she would say:*
*To the public bath of Minjâb, what is the way?*

As he repeated this one day, a young girl responded from a window: Hey, pervert!

*If only when you captured her, you did brace,*
*Your home with guards or a door lock in its place.*

This inflamed his passions and increased his frustration. He continued reciting this statement until they were his last words![243]

Another report mentions:

Sufyân ath-Thawri once cried an entire night until the morning. In the morning, someone asked him whether all this was out of fear of sinning. He grabbed some straws from the ground. Then he explained that his sins were lighter than that, but he was crying out of fear of an evil seal [to his life].

This understanding is at one of the highest (levels) – a person fearing that sins may come between them and a good seal at death.

Imam Aḥmad mentions:

On his deathbed, Abu ad-Dardâ' would fall asleep and then wake up and say:

﴿وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْـِٔدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَـٰرَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِى طُغْيَـٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١١٠)

﴿We will turn their hearts and eyes away [from the truth], since they refused to believe in it the first time, and We will leave them to wander blindly in their misguidance.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 110)*[244]

The salaf feared sins lest they became a barricade between them and a good seal.

'Abdul-Ḥaqq [al-Ishbeeli] warns us:

An evil seal – may Allah protect us from it – is not for those who are externally upright and internally pure. This was never heard of and never known, and to Allah belongs all praise [for that]. It is only for those whose beliefs are corrupt, who persist in major sins, or who audaciously commit serious crimes. Sometimes these overwhelm people until death meets them before repentance. It grabs them before they rectify their inner state, and they are snatched away before their reform. Satan comes away with them during this shocker and kidnaps them at this moment of bewilderment. We seek refuge in Allah [from this].

He also relates:

It was also reported that a man in Egypt was constantly in the mosque to call the adhân, iqâmah, and the prayer. The brightness of obedience and lights of worship used to radiate from him.

One day, he ascended the minaret as usual for the adhân. Below the minaret was the home of a Christian man. He looked into it, saw the owner's daughter and was captivated by her. Instead of calling the adhân, he climbed down and entered the house to see her.

She asked him: What is the matter with you? What do you want?

He replied: I want you.

She asked: Why?

He replied: You have captivated my mind and taken over my heart.

She told him: I will never consent to any promiscuity with you.

He replied: I will marry you.

She told him: You are a Muslim, and I am a Christian. My father will never let me marry you.

He told her: I will become a Christian!

She replied: If you do, I will agree.

The man became a Christian to marry her and stayed with her in the house. Later that day, he climbed the house's roof and fell to death. He did not attain her, and he ruined his religion![245]

He relates another incident:

It was also reported that a man loved another insanely, and the love became so rooted in his heart that he fell ill and became bedridden. His beloved refused to visit him and became increasingly averse to him. People continued mediating between them until he eventually promised to visit him. When the ill person was informed of this, he beamed joyfully and became relieved of his depression.

He continued waiting for the promised appointment until the mediator between them came to him and told him: He came with me for part of the way, but then he turned back. I chased and spoke to him, but he explained: He [the ill person] remembered me and became joyful. I refuse to enter a suspicious scenario or subject myself to any accusation.

I pleaded with him, but he refused and walked away. When the ill person heard this, he collapsed and became worse than he had been. Signs of death began surfacing on him, and he kept saying in this state:

*O Aslam, O comfort of the one who is ill,*
*O cure of the one whose disease made him wither.*
*Your pleasure is dearer, closer to my heart,*
*Than the mercy of the greatest Creator.*

I said to him: Fear Allah!

He replied: It is too late.

I stood up and had not left his house before I heard the cries over his death.

We seek refuge with Allah from an evil end and a doomed seal.

# The Great Harms of Sodomy

As sodomy's harms are some of the greatest, its punishment in both worlds is one of the greatest as well.

People have different views on this issue: Does it have a harsher punishment than fornication, or does fornication have a harsher punishment, or are their punishments equal? There are three views:

1. The first is the view of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, ʻAli ibn Abi Ṭâlib, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, ʻAbdullâh ibn az-Zubayr, Ibn ʻAbbâs, Jâbir ibn Zayd, ʻAbdullâh ibn Maʻmar, az-Zuhri, Rabeeʻah ibn Abi ʻAbdur-Raḥmân, Imam Mâlik, Is-ḥâq ibn Râhawayh, Imam Aḥmad in the more correct narration about him, and Imam ash-Shâfiʻi in one of his verdicts. They view that its punishment is harsher than the punishment for fornication, and the punishment is execution in all cases, whether he is married or unmarried.

2. The second is the view of ʻAṭâ' ibn Abi Rabâḥ, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, Saʻeed ibn al-Musayyib, Ibrâheem an-Nakhaʻi, Qatâdah, al-Awzâʻi, ash-Shâfiʻi in his more famous view, Imam Aḥmad in the other narration about him, Abu Yoosuf, and Muhammad. They view that its punishment and the punishment for fornication are equal.

3. The third view is of Abu Ḥaneefah and al-Ḥakam. They view its punishment as less severe than the punishment for fornication, and its punishment is ta‘zeer (discretionary). They noted that this is because it is a sin for which Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) did not determine a ḥadd punishment. Therefore its punishment is discretionary, like that of drinking blood, eating dead meat, or the flesh of swine.

They also defended this view by arguing that penetration here occurs in a cavity that is naturally considered undesirable. In other words, Allah (□) has created the nature of humans and animals to find this repulsive. Hence, there was no punishment prescribed in the Revelation to deter from it, just as none is specified for having intercourse with a donkey or otherwise.

They also cite that the term ‘fornicator’ is not conventionally used in reference to the sodomite – not linguistically, not in the Sharia, and not in (most) cultural norms. Therefore, the texts that call for a legislative punishment do not apply to such a person.

They explain that, according to Sharia principles, when human nature serves as the deterrent from any sin, that deterrent suffices in place of the legislative punishment. Likewise, when human nature inclines to any sin, the punishment is legislated proportionately to the inborn desire for it. For this reason, there is a legislative punishment for fornication, theft, and drinking intoxicants, but not for drinking blood, eating dead meat, or the flesh of swine.

They add that for this reason, there is no legislative punishment for intercourse with an animal or with the dead. Similarly, Allah (□) has set within human nature an inborn aversion for a man to penetrate another man or allow another man to penetrate him. That is unlike fornication, where both parties are inclined towards it.

They also cite as evidence for this another fact, namely that sexual relations with the same gender do not result in a prescribed punishment

(since they do not involve the vaginal penetration by the penis) – such as in the case of two lesbians having sexual relations.

Those holding the first view represent the majority of Ummah. Some also consider this a consensus between the Companions. They hold that this sin is the most harmful. It comes directly after the harm of disbelief, and it is perhaps even more harmful than murder, as we will explain, Allah willing.

They state that Allah (□) has never afflicted anyone before the people of Looṭ with this atrocity. They received a punishment that no other nation had ever received. He gathered upon them a variety of punishments for their destruction: overturning their homes upon them, the earth caving inwards beneath them, pelting them with stones from the sky, and thrashing them the way no other nation had been.

All that happened due to the colossal harm of this crime. It almost causes the earth to sway whenever it is performed upon it. It also makes the angels flee beyond the heavens and earth whenever they witness it, fearing that the punishment will descend upon its people and afflict them. It makes the earth cry to its Lord, the Blessed and High, and nearly dislodges the mountains from their places.

For the one sodomized, being killed is better than being sodomized. Subjecting one to sodomy is like murder that leaves no hope for life. Killing him makes him a victim and a martyr, which may benefit him in the hereafter.

Those who hold the first view cite as proof the fact that Allah (□) has left inflicting the ḥadd punishment on the murderer to the guardian's discretion. The guardian may choose to have the murderer executed or pardon him if he likes. Conversely, Allah has deemed executing the sodomites mandatory. The Companions of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) unanimously agreed upon it, and the authentic, explicit, uncontested Sunnah

of the Prophet (ﷺ) proves it. His Companions and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs acted upon it as well.

> Khâlid ibn al-Waleed found, in the outskirts of Arabia, a man used for sex, just as a woman is used. He wrote to Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, and Abu Bakr consulted the Companions. The severest view regarding this was from ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib who determined: Only one nation has ever practised this, and you know what Allah did with them. I view that he be burned with fire.
>
> Abu Bakr wrote back to Khâlid, and he burned the man.[246]

Ibn ‘Abbâs mentions, “Find the highest building in town and throw the homosexual from it headfirst. Then pelt him with stones.”[247]

Ibn ‘Abbâs derived this legislative punishment from the punishment of Allah for the people of Looṭ, for he was the one who narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«If you find anyone practising the act of the people of Looṭ, kill the one who does it and the one to whom it is done.» (Recorded by Abu Dâwood, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mâjah, Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, and al-Bayhaqi)[248]

This hadith was recorded by the collectors of *as-Sunan* and authenticated by Ibn Ḥibbân and others. Imam Aḥmad cited this hadith as evidence, and its chain matches the criteria of Imam Bukhari.

They pointed out that it was also confirmed that Ibn ‘Abbâs reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«May Allah curse the one who does the act of the people of Looṭ. May Allah curse the one who does the act of the people of Looṭ. May Allah curse the one who does the act of the people of Looṭ.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Ya‘lâ, Ibn Ḥibbân, al-Ḥâkim, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and al-Bayhaqi with an authentic chain of narration)

We do not find a single hadith where the Prophet (ﷺ) cursed the fornicator three times. He cursed several of those who committed major sins but never cursed them more than once. Yet he cursed the homosexual three times for emphasis.

The Companions of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) all agreed that he (the sodomite) should be executed. No two men among them differed regarding that. Their views only differed regarding the method of execution, and that made some people assume that the debate was about him being killed. As a result, they reported it as a matter of disagreement between them. However, this matter is of unanimous consensus, not controversy.

They also state that the difference between the two will become clear to whoever reflects on Allah's warnings and His indignation about homosexuality:

﴿ وَلَا تَقۡرَبُواْ ٱلزِّنَىٰٓۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةٗ وَسَآءَ سَبِيلٗا ٣٢ ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٢)

﴿Do not approach fornication [or adultery] [*fâḥishah*], for it is shameful, and an abominable way indeed.﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 32)*

﴿ ... أَتَأۡتُونَ ٱلۡفَٰحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنۡ أَحَدٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٨٠ ﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٨٠)

﴿…Do you commit this shameful deed [*al-fâḥishah*] that no one in the world has ever committed before you?﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 80)*

Allah (□) has used the indefinite noun ﴿*fâḥishah*﴾ regarding fornication, rendering it 'an immorality (among others)'. Conversely, Allah has used the definite form ﴿*al-fâḥishah*﴾ regarding sodomy, rendering it 'the immorality', which implies every possible meaning of the word. It is just like (the difference between) saying, "Zayd is a man" and "Zayd is an excellent man."

In other words, do you commit an act whose immorality everyone has established? Do you perform an immoral act that is synonymous with immorality?

It is analogous to the statement of Fir'awn to Moosâ (□):[249]

﴿وَفَعَلۡتَ فَعۡلَتَكَ ٱلَّتِي فَعَلۡتَ ... ١٩﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٩)

﴿Yet you did the deed you did…﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 19)*

Allah (□) emphasizes its repulsive nature by stating that never has anyone in the world practised it before them:

﴿ ... مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنۡ أَحَدٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٨٠﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٨٠)

﴿…no one in the world has ever committed before you.﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 80)*

﴿ ... مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنۡ أَحَدٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٢٨﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٢٨)

﴿…no one in the world has ever committed before you.﴾ *(al-'Ankaboot 29: 28)*

He further emphasizes that by explicitly mentioning what causes the heart to cringe, the ears to be shocked, and human nature to shudder from; a man engaging another man like him, similar to how he has intercourse with a woman:

﴿إِنَّكُمۡ لَتَأۡتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ شَهۡوَةٗ ... ٨١﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٨١)

﴿For you approach men with lust…﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 81)*

Here, He alludes to them not needing it, meaning what drives them towards it is nothing but desire. It is not the need for which the male is inclined to the female to satisfy his desire and enjoy himself. It is also not the need to acquire love and mercy that makes the woman forget her parents and remember her husband. It is not for acquiring progeny to safeguard this

species. It is not to protect the wife, satisfy her desire, or build an in-law relationship, the sister of ancestry. It is not to fulfil the man's role of maintaining women or obtain other benefits of marriage. It is not for producing, via intercourse, the most beloved of creatures to Allah, which have included the Prophets and (greatest) saints, and now the virtuous believers, which allow the Prophet's Ummah to ultimately outnumber the followers of other Prophets.[250]

The harm connected with homosexuality obstructs all that and adds harm that cannot be enumerated. No one knows their details except Allah.

Allah emphasizes its repulsiveness by stating that homosexuals behave contrary to the fiṭrah He inculcated in men. They reverse the male's natural disposition, where Allah has created males to desire women rather than men. They reverse the cosmic order, act against the fiṭrah, and lust after men instead of women.

For this reason, Allah overturned their homes upon them (the people of Looṭ) and made the highest part (of the city) its lowest. He did the same with their hearts, and they landed in the punishment headfirst.

Allah also emphasizes its abhorrent nature by calling it transgression, which is the breaching of lawful boundaries:

﴿ ... بَلۡ أَنتُمۡ قَوۡمٞ مُّسۡرِفُونَ ٨١ ﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ٨١)

﴿…You are indeed a people transgressing beyond all bounds.﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 81)*

Now reflect: Has this (punishment), or anything close to it, ever come regarding fornication?

Allah (□) also highlights their wickedness:

﴿ ... وَنَجَّيۡنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِ ٱلَّتِي كَانَت تَّعۡمَلُ ٱلۡخَبَٰٓئِثَۗ ... ٧٤ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٧٤)

﴿…We saved him[251] from the city that practised abominations…﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 74)*

He stresses their wickedness using two horrible descriptions:

﴿ ... إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ قَوۡمَ سَوۡءٖ فَٰسِقِينَ ٧٤ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٧٤)

﴿…Verily, they were a people given to wickedness, and rebellious.﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 74)*

He names them as ﴿those who spread mischief﴾ in the words of their Prophet:

﴿ ... رَبِّ ٱنصُرۡنِي عَلَى ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلۡمُفۡسِدِينَ ٣٠ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٣٠)

﴿…O my Lord, help me against those who spread mischief.﴾ *(al-'Ankaboot 29: 30)*

He names them as wicked in the statement of the angels to Ibrâheem:

﴿ ... إِنَّا مُهۡلِكُوٓاْ أَهۡلِ هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِۖ إِنَّ أَهۡلَهَا كَانُواْ ظَٰلِمِينَ ٣١ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٣١)

﴿…We are going to destroy the people of this city, for they have indeed been persisting in wickedness.﴾ *(al-'Ankaboot 29: 31)*

Consider all this. Who has been punished with the likes of these punishments? Who has Allah dispraised with the likes of these dispraises? When His beloved Ibrâheem argued with the angels who informed him of their destruction, he was told:

﴿ يَٰٓإِبۡرَٰهِيمُ أَعۡرِضۡ عَنۡ هَٰذَآۖ إِنَّهُۥ قَدۡ جَآءَ أَمۡرُ رَبِّكَۖ وَإِنَّهُمۡ ءَاتِيهِمۡ عَذَابٌ غَيۡرُ مَرۡدُودٖ ٧٦ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٧٦)

﴿O Ibrâheem, cease your pleading, for verily the decree of your Lord has gone forth; verily there is coming to them a punishment that cannot be averted.﴾ *(Hood 11: 76)*

Consider the lewdness of these homosexuals and their utter mutiny against Allah when they marched to their Prophet (Looṭ). They had heard that he was hosting guests who were the most handsome of people. The homosexuals came running to him, and Looṭ (□) told them:

﴿ ... يَٰقَوۡمِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطۡهَرُ لَكُمۡۖ فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُخۡزُونِ فِي ضَيۡفِيٓۖ أَلَيۡسَ مِنكُمۡ رَجُلٞ رَّشِيدٞ ٧٨ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٧٨)

﴿…O my people, here are my daughters; they are purer for you. Fear Allah and do not put me to shame by wronging my guests. Is there not among you even one right-minded man?﴾ *(Hood 11: 78)*[252]

They gave a tyrannous, stubborn response:

﴿ ... لَقَدۡ عَلِمۡتَ مَا لَنَا فِي بَنَاتِكَ مِنۡ حَقّٖ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعۡلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ ٧٩ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٧٩)

﴿...You know that we have no need of your daughters. You know very well what we want.﴾ *(Hood 11: 79)*

The Prophet of Allah sighed grievously from a distressed heart:

﴿ ... لَوۡ أَنَّ لِي بِكُمۡ قُوَّةً أَوۡ ءَاوِيٓ إِلَىٰ رُكۡنٖ شَدِيدٖ ٨٠ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٨٠)

﴿...Would that I had the strength to stop you or that I could have recourse to some powerful support.﴾ *(Hood 11: 80)*

Upon that, the messengers of Allah relieved him, disclosed to him the reality of the situation, and informed him that they would neither be harmed nor let him be harmed, and that he should not fear them or pay any attention to them. Rather, he should put himself at ease:

﴿ ... يَٰلُوطُ إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَن يَصِلُوٓاْ إِلَيۡكَۖ ... ﴿٨١﴾ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٨١)

﴿…O Loot, we are messengers of your Lord; they will never be able to harm you...﴾ *(Hood 11: 81)*

They then gave him glad tidings of the promise they were bringing him and the imminent threat they were bringing his people:

﴿ ... فَأَسۡرِ بِأَهۡلِكَ بِقِطۡعٖ مِّنَ ٱلَّيۡلِ وَلَا يَلۡتَفِتۡ مِنكُمۡ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا ٱمۡرَأَتَكَۖ إِنَّهُۥ مُصِيبُهَا مَآ أَصَابَهُمۡۚ إِنَّ مَوۡعِدَهُمُ ٱلصُّبۡحُۚ أَلَيۡسَ ٱلصُّبۡحُ بِقَرِيبٖ ﴿٨١﴾ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٨١)

﴿…So depart with your family in the dead of night – and let none of you look back – except your wife; she will suffer the same fate as the others. Verily, their appointed time is the morning; is not the morning nigh?﴾ *(Hood 11: 81)*

The Prophet of Allah (Loot) felt their time for destruction was far. He indicated he wanted it sooner, so the angels remarked ﴿Is not the morning nigh?﴾.

By Allah, nothing but the break of dawn was between Allah's enemies being destroyed and His Prophet and servants being rescued. Immediately, their homes were torn from their foundations and lifted towards the sky, and the angels heard the dogs barking and the donkeys braying (in panic). The decree then descended from the Majestic Lord to Jibreel, His servant and messenger, to overturn the city upon them. Allah informs us of it in His precise revelation:

﴿فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمۡرُنَا جَعَلۡنَا عَٰلِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمۡطَرۡنَا عَلَيۡهَا حِجَارَةٗ مِّن سِجِّيلٖ مَّنضُودٖ ﴿٨٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٨٢)

﴿When Our command came, We turned [the cities] upside down and let loose upon them a shower of stones of baked clay, one after another.﴾ *(Hood*

*11: 82)*

He made them an example for this world, an exhortation for the pious, and a notorious precedent for every criminal partaking in their actions. For this reason, He has situated their homes upon the roads of the travellers:

﴿إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَإِنَّهَا لَبِسَبِيلٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾﴾ (سورة الحِجر: ٧٥-٧٧)

﴿Surely in that there are signs for the discerning. And it [the city] is on a road that is still travelled. Surely in that there is a sign for the believers.﴾ *(al-Ḥijr 15: 75-77)*

He took them by surprise while they slept, and His thrashing came to them while they stumbled in their stupor. Nothing of what they earned availed them whatsoever; these pleasures were turned into agonies and became a reason for their torment.

The pleasures departed, and regrets followed. The desires ended, and misery was inherited. They enjoyed it for a short while and then were punished for ages. They grazed in evil pastures, those which elicited severe punishment. Lust intoxicated them, and they did not sober up until they landed in the abode of the punished. They were put to sleep by their oblivion, and they only awoke from it after landing in the stations of the doomed. By Allah, they felt the most intense regret when regret could no longer benefit them. For their past, they cried blood in place of tears.

If only you could see the depths to which this group has sunk. In various levels of the blaze, the fire emerges from the openings in their faces and bodies. Instead of delicious drinks, they drink glasses of boiling water. As they are being dragged on their faces, they are told:

﴿... ذُوقُوا۟ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة الزُّمَر: ٢٤)

﴿…Taste [the punishment for] what you used to earn.﴾ *(az-Zumar 39: 24)*

﴿ ٱصۡلَوۡهَا فَٱصۡبِرُوٓاْ أَوۡ لَا تَصۡبِرُواْ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيۡكُمۡۖ إِنَّمَا تُجۡزَوۡنَ مَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ١٦ ﴾

(سورة الطور: ١٦)

﴿Burn therein, and whether you bear it patiently or not, it will make no difference to you; you will be requited only for what you used to do.﴾ *(aṭ-Ṭoor 52: 16)*

Allah (□) has brought closer the distance between that nation and those practising its vices today. To terrify them that He will carry out this threat, He issues this warning:

﴿ ... وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بِبَعِيدِۭ ٨٣ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٨٣)

﴿…And it [that is, Allah's punishment] is not from the wrongdoers [very] far.﴾ *(Hood 11: 83)*[253]

A poet recited:

*O engager of males, I bring you glad tidings,*
*For you, on the Last Day, is a grand prize.*
*Eat, drink, fornicate, continue to sodomize -*
*Rejoice; in the red garden is your demise.*
*Your brethren have paved the abode before;*
*They told us: Rush this scene to their eyes…*
*Here we are, your ancestors, awaiting you,*
*In His grand fire; the Almighty gathers us equally.*
*Do not think those you engaged in vice,*
*Will be absent; no, you will see them all vividly.*
*Each will pray that his beloved be damned,*
*At other times, the grieved looks to him painfully.*
*Each of them, by his very partner, is tortured,*
*Just as they partnered in that lust sinfully.*

There is a plethora of rebuttals for those who consider the punishment for this immorality (sodomy) less than the punishment for fornication, and for the claim that Allah did not determine a particular ḥadd punishment for this sin:

1. The one who conveyed Allah's laws determined that execution is the mandatory legislative punishment for its doer. Whatever is legislated by Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) is legislated by him on behalf of Allah. If you mean that the Sharia has not determined its legislative punishment, it is untrue. If you mean that the Qur'an did not establish it directly, that does not necessitate the ruling being non-existent. That is because the Sunnah confirms it.

2. This ultimately entails your denial of stoning (the fornicator), which is only confirmed in the Sunnah. You may claim, "No, the Qur'an confirms it; its recitation has been abrogated, but its ruling remains." Our response is that this (argument) is refuted by the legislative punishment for drinking wine (which was also never in the Qur'an).

3. Denying a particular proof does not necessitate denying every proof or denying whatever is proven by it. How about if someone established that the proof you denied still stands? For instance, they may claim that this is penetration in a naturally undesirable place, and Allah (□) disposed human nature as averse to it. It is analogous to having intercourse with an animal or the dead. There are many responses to this:

    a. This analogy is fallacious and invalid, for it conflicts with the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and the consensus of his Companions, as we have previously explained.

    b. Giving an analogy between a handsome young man whose charm is captivating, and having intercourse with a dead woman or a donkey, is one of the faultiest of analogies. Has anyone ever been infatuated with a donkey, a cow, or the dead? Has that ever

captivated the heart or mind of the lover, or dominated the mind and thinking? This analogy is, therefore, most fallacious.

c. This analogy is refuted by referring to intercourse with the mother, daughter or sister. Natural aversion exists here, yet its legislative punishment is one of the severest, according to one of the two views. It necessitates execution in every case, whether the man is married or unmarried. This is in one of the two narrations from Aḥmad. Is-ḥâq and many Hadith experts hold this view.

It was reported:

«Al-Barâ' ibn 'Âzib said: I met my paternal uncle while he was carrying the flag.

I asked him: Where are you heading?

He replied: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) has sent me to a man, who married his father's wife after him, to cut off his head and confiscate his property.» (Recorded by Abu Dâwood, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasâ'i, and Aḥmad; at-Tirmidhi graded this hadith reliable)

Al-Jawzijâni mentions that the paternal uncle of al-Barâ' was al-Ḥârith ibn 'Amr.

It is also in *as-Sunan* of Abu Dâwood,[254] from the hadith of Ibn 'Abbâs, who narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«If someone has intercourse with a maḥram, kill him.» (Recorded by Ibn Mâjah, at-Tirmidhi, ad-Dâraquṭni, al-Ḥâkim, and al-Bayhaqi; its chain has two weak narrators; deemed munkar by Abu Ḥâtim ar-Râzi)

A man who raped his sister was brought before al-Ḥajjâj. He ordered the people to imprison him and ask one of the Companions of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) about it. They asked 'Abdullâh ibn Abi Muṭarrif who replied that he heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«If anyone violates the females of the believers, violate his waist with the sword.» (Recorded by Ibn Abi ‘Âṣim, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, al-Bayhaqi, and Ibn ‘Adiy)[255]

This supports execution by severing the torso and is a definitive proof for this matter. If the intercourse is with someone unlawful under any circumstance, the legislative punishment is execution. This applies to whoever has intercourse with one’s mother, daughter, maḥram, or someone with whom intercourse can never be lawful, like the homosexual.

The reality is that both cases are proven by the (previous) text, and (proper) analogy testifies to the correctness of both.

Muslims agree that whoever fornicates with a maḥram is subject to legislative punishment. They only differ in the kind of punishment. Is it execution in all cases, or is the punishment legislated for fornication? There are two views:

The view adopted by Imam ash-Shâfi‘i, Imam Mâlik, and Imam Aḥmad (in one narration) is that its prescribed punishment is identical to the legislated punishment for fornication.

The general view adopted by Aḥmad and Is-ḥâq and many of the Hadith experts is that its prescribed punishment is execution in all cases.

Nearly all agree that if a man engages his maḥram in the name of marriage while knowing its impermissibility, he receives the legislative punishment. Only Abu Ḥaneefah viewed that this ruling contained uncertainty that waived this punishment. His opposition claimed that if a man engages her in the name of marriage, this augments the crime’s gravity. He has, in that case, committed two great offences – the offence of the contract and the offence of the intercourse. How can it lessen his punishment when he has combined the crime of an (invalid) contract and the crime of fornication?

Jurists have two views regarding necrophilia (penetrating the dead). They are both found in the juristic school of Imam Aḥmad and elsewhere. The first view is that it necessitates legislative punishment.[256] This view is held by al-Awzâʻi, who considers its doer a greater criminal and worse sinner for combining his immorality with violating the sanctity of the dead.

Jurists have three views regarding bestiality (penetrating an animal):

1. The first view is that he should be disciplined, but there is no particular legislative punishment. This view is held by Is-ḥâq, Imam Mâlik, Imam Abu Ḥaneefah, and Imam ash-Shâfiʻi in one of his two verdicts.

2. The second view is that his ruling is that of the fornicator. He is flogged if he is a virgin but stoned if he is married. Al-Ḥasan held this view.

3. The third view is that his ruling is that of the homosexual. Aḥmad stated so, depending on which of his two narrations we take: execution or the fornicator's punishment.

Those who claim that its legislative punishment is execution cite as proof what has been recorded by Abu Dâwood, where Ibn ʻAbbâs reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«If anyone has sexual intercourse with an animal, kill him and kill it along with him.» (Recorded by Abu Dâwood, Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, al-Ḥâkim, ad-Dâraquṭni, and al-Bayhaqi with a reliable chain of narration)

They indicate that this is also because this is intercourse that can never be lawful. Its legislative punishment is execution, like for homosexuals. Those who do not view that there is a legislative punishment allege that no hadith was authenticated regarding this.[257] They argue that were it authentic, it would have been adopted, and it would not have been lawful for anyone to oppose it.

Ismâ‘eel ibn Sa‘eed ash-Shâlanji mentions that he asked Imam Aḥmad about a person having intercourse with an animal. He remained silent about it and indicated that the hadith of ‘Amr ibn Abi ‘Amr regarding this had not been confirmed.[258]

Aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi claims that the hadith is weak and that its narrator was Ibn ‘Abbâs, who viewed that there is no legislative punishment for this. Abu Dâwood states that this (contradiction) weakens the hadith.

Human nature testifies that the natural deterrent against sexual relations with an animal is stronger than the natural deterrent against homosexuality. Comparing the two is a most fallacious analogy.

Likewise, one cannot make an analogy between sodomy and two lesbians fondling each other. There is no penetration, and it is comparable to a man engaging another man without penetration. This was based on the marfoo‘ report from Abu Moosâ:

«If a woman engages another woman sensually, they are both fornicators.» (A weak hadith recorded by al-Bayhaqi)

Legislative punishment is not necessitated here due to the absence of penetration. Even if the general name of fornication applies to them, this is like the fornication of the eye, hand, leg or mouth.

Having established that, Muslims also agree that the ruling on sodomy with a slave is identical to its ruling with other men. Those who assume that it is permissible for a person to sodomize his slave, and they cite this verse as evidence:

﴿ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزۡوَٰجِهِمۡ أَوۡ مَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُهُمۡ فَإِنَّهُمۡ غَيۡرُ مَلُومِينَ ٣٠ ﴾ (سورة المعارج: ٣٠)

﴿Except with their wives or any slave women they may own, for then they are free of blame.﴾ *(al-Ma‘ârij 70: 30)*

– and consider it analogous to the female slave are disbelievers. A person (with that belief) would be asked (by the judiciary) to repent, like any apostate is asked to repent. Either he repents, or his head is cut off.

Also, a person sodomizing his slave is like him sodomizing the slave of another in its sin and ruling.

# The Cure for Lusting

Some may ask whether there is a cure for this fatal disease. Is there a remedy for this murderous magic? What is the solution to this insanity? Is there a road from here to prosperity? Is it possible for the one intoxicated with lust to awaken? Can the lover's heart recover after the lust has reached its depths? Can any doctor effectively cure this brutal disease? When blamed, the lover enjoys the blame because it is a reminder of the beloved. When censured, he is motivated by the censure and continues the quest. The lover's condition calls out to the beloved as if to say:

> *My desire stopped at you, leaving nothing for me,*
> *I cannot step back from it, nor can I proceed.*
> *I worked to humiliate myself, as you humiliated me,*
> *For those you ignore are the humiliated indeed.*
> *You resembled my enemies, so I began liking them,*
> *Since my share of you and them was the same.*
> *I find blame, when it pleases you, to be delighted,*
> *Loving your mention, so let the blamers blame.*

Perhaps this was the aim behind the original question and the disease for which the cure was sought.[259]

It is said: Yes, the answer in principle is that:

«Allah did not send down a disease without also sending down a cure for it. Those who know the cure are able to treat it with Allah's permission.» (An authentic hadith recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥumaydi, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Mâjah, Abu Dâwood, and at-Tirmidhi)

We will discuss two methods to cure this (particular) disease. The first is to hinder its inlets before infection, and the second is to extract them after infection. Both are easy for whoever Allah makes them easy but are impossible for whoever He does not aid. The reins of all matters are in His Hands.

Preventing infection from this disease depends on two matters.

## Lowering one's gaze

The first is lowering one's gaze, as previously mentioned. The glance is one of the poisoned arrows of Iblees, and whoever does not control their glances suffers constant sorrow.

Lowering one's gaze has numerous benefits, and each is a component of the beneficial cure:

1. It is compliance with Allah's command, which is the pinnacle of happiness for a person in this worldly life and at one's meeting (with Him). Nothing benefits a person in this worldly life or the hereafter more than embodying the Lord's command. One can only be joyful in this world and the hereafter by following His commands and miserable by neglecting them.
2. It obstructs the poisoned arrow, which may entail one's doom, from reaching the heart.

3. It embeds within the heart nearness to Allah and enables it to focus upon Him. Leaving one's gaze unbound distracts the heart, divides it, and distances it from Allah. Nothing is more harmful to the heart than unleashing one's gaze, for it causes estrangement between the person and the Lord.

4. It strengthens and delights the heart, just as unleashing one's gaze weakens and grieves it.

5. It earns the heart light, just as unleashing it earns it darkness. For this reason, Allah (□) mentions the verse of light shortly after the command to lower one's gaze:

﴿قُل لِّلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ يَغُضُّواْ مِنۡ أَبۡصَٰرِهِمۡ وَيَحۡفَظُواْ فُرُوجَهُمۡۚ ... ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ (سورة النور: ٣٠)

﴿Tell the believing men to avert their gaze [from that which is forbidden] and restrain their carnal desires…﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 30)*

﴿ ۞ ٱللَّهُ نُورُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ كَمِشۡكَوٰةٖ فِيهَا مِصۡبَاحٌۖ ... ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة النور: ٣٥)

﴿Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The likeness of His light is that of a niche in which is a lamp…﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 35)*

The verse refers to His light in His believing slave's heart, who obeys His commands and avoids His prohibitions.

When the heart is illuminated, fleets of good come to it from every direction. On the contrary, clouds of tribulation and evil come from everywhere when it darkens. The heart's light removes every imaginable evil: innovation, deviation, following desires, resisting guidance, ignoring the means to prosperity, and being busy with the

means to misery. When that light is lost, its owner becomes like a blind person who stumbles in the blackest darkness.

6. It produces accurate intuition by distinguishing truth from falsehood and the truthful from the liars.

Ibn Shujâ‘ al-Karmâni used to say that firâsah (intuition) will never fail those who:

- Follow the Sunnah;
- Are constantly watchful (of Allah);
- Lower their gaze from the unlawful;
- Keep away from the doubtful;
- Are nourished with the lawful.

Ibn Shujâ‘ himself had infallible intuition.

Allah (□) rewards individuals for their actions with something related to those actions:

«If someone gives something up for Allah, Allah compensates with (something) better than it.» (Recorded by Aḥmad and others with an authentic chain of narration)[260]

When one lowers their gaze from what Allah has forbidden, Allah compensates by providing the light of His insight in exchange. He opens the doors of knowledge, faith, and accurate intuition only attained via the heart’s insight.

Allah describes homosexuals as the complete opposite – as wandering blindly, which is the opposite of insight:

﴿ لَعَمۡرُكَ إِنَّهُمۡ لَفِي سَكۡرَتِهِمۡ يَعۡمَهُونَ ٧٢ ﴾ (سورة الحِجر: ٧٢)

﴿By your life [O Muhammad], they were wandering blindly in their lustful frenzy.﴾ *(al-Ḥijr 15: 72)*

Here, He describes them as:

- Intoxicated, which refers to the corruption of the mind, and
- Wandering blindly, which refers to the corruption of the heart.

Being attached to an image of someone corrupts the mind, blinds the insight, and intoxicates the heart, as the poet states:

> *Drunkenness is from two – desires and addiction.*
> *How can the double drunk survive that affliction?*

Another poet states:

> *They said: You have gone mad with your love.*
> *You said to them: Love is fiercer than insanity.*
> *Lust never allows its victim to revive,*
> *Yet the insane undergo seizures temporarily.*

7. It grants the heart firmness, courage, and strength. Allah (□) gathers for it the authority of evidence and strength. This is like the proverb, "If people oppose their desires, Satan flees from their shadow."

The complete opposite is found with the follower of desires. Allah inflicts utter lowliness, disgrace, ignominy, and pettiness on those who disobey Him.

Al-Ḥasan mentions:

> Even if horses trot with them and the stallions dance below them, the disgrace of sin is upon their faces. Allah will only humiliate those who disobey Him.

Allah (□) deems honour the twin of obedience and dishonour the twin of sin:

﴿ ... وَلِلَّهِ ٱلۡعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلِلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ... ﴿٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة المنافقون: ٨)

﴿…And to Allah belongs [all] honour, and to His Messenger, and to the believers...﴾ *(al-Munâfiqoon 63: 8)*[261]

﴿وَلَا تَهِنُواْ وَلَا تَحۡزَنُواْ وَأَنتُمُ ٱلۡأَعۡلَوۡنَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٣٩)

﴿So do not lose heart nor grieve, for you will overcome if you are [truly] believers.﴾ *(Âl ʻImrân 3: 139)*

Belief is a statement and action, internal and external:

﴿ مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلۡعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلۡعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًاۚ إِلَيۡهِ يَصۡعَدُ ٱلۡكَلِمُ ٱلطَّيِّبُ وَٱلۡعَمَلُ ٱلصَّٰلِحُ يَرۡفَعُهُۥۚ ... ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ١٠)

﴿Whoever seeks honour, then all honour belongs to Allah. To Him ascend all good words, and righteous deeds exalt them...﴾ *(Fâṭir 35: 10)*[262]

In other words, those who desire honour should seek it through obedience and remembrance of Allah with good speech and righteous works.

The Prophet (ﷺ) would supplicate while standing during the prayer:

«إِنَّهُ لاَ يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ وَلاَ يَعِزُّ مَنْ عَادَيْتَ.»

«*Innahu lâ yadhillu man wâlayt, wa lâ ya'izzu man 'âdayt.*

(None with whom You ally is dishonoured, and none to whom You show enmity is honoured).» (An authentic hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood and others)[263]

Those who obey Allah become His allies through obedience and are honoured in proportion to it. Conversely, those who disobey Allah show enmity to Him through disobedience and are dishonoured in proportion to it.

8. It blocks Satan's entrance to the heart, for he enters the heart with a glance faster than air enters a vacuum. There, he flashes and beautifies what is being gazed at, making it an idol that the heart clings to. Then he makes promises, makes a person wishful, ignites the flames of lust in the heart, and unloads upon the person sins that would not have been possible without that image. Thereby, the heart is set ablaze.

   This blaze leads to the flame-like exhalations that a person suffers, along with sighs and sorrows. The heart is surrounded by this fire (of lust) from every direction. The person is amidst them like a lamb in an oven. That is why those lusting after unlawful images are punished with an oven of flames in the barzakh. Their souls are kept there until their bodies are resurrected. Allah (□) showed that to His Prophet (ﷺ) in his sleep, as mentioned in an authentic hadith.

9. It empties the heart so it can think and busy itself with its welfare. Leaving the gaze unbound impedes this and causes people to forget it. Consequently, they become careless of their affairs, frequently follow their desires, and become heedless of remembering their Lord:

﴿ ... وَلَا تُطِعۡ مَنۡ أَغۡفَلۡنَا قَلۡبَهُۥ عَن ذِكۡرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمۡرُهُۥ فُرُطٗا ٢٨ ﴾

(سورة الكهف: ٢٨)

﴿…And do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who follows his own whims and desires, and is reckless in his deeds.﴾ *(al-Kahf 18: 28)*

These three matters take place to the extent the eye's gaze is left unchecked.

10. Between the eye and heart is a window and pathway that prevents the two from being separated. When one flourishes, the other flourishes, and when one spoils, so does the other. When the sight is spoiled, so is the heart, and when the heart is spoiled, so is the sight – just as is the case with flourishing.

    The heart is ruined and corrupted when the eyes are ruined and corrupted. It becomes like a dump which gathers filth, impurities, and dirt. It becomes unsuitable as a residence for knowing Allah, loving Him, turning to Him, enjoying His company, and being pleased to be close to Him. This requires an opposite type of environment.

The above was a glimpse at some of the benefits of lowering one's gaze and how to implement them.

## Occupying the heart with something beneficial

The second method of preventing the heart's attachment (to an unlawful image) is by occupying the heart with something else that will keep it away from this (attachment) and stop it from falling into it. This is either a worrying fear (of negative consequences) or a disrupting love (for something else).

The heart is compelled to adore these images when:

- It does not fear missing out on anything that would harm it less than attaining the beloved.
- It does not fear attaining anything that would harm it more than missing out on the beloved.

- It ceases to love what is better and more beneficial than the beloved, even though its loss could cause it more harm.

One's inner self will only leave something beloved for something more beloved or out of fear of something hated that is more harmful than missing out on the beloved. One requires two things for this. Missing out on either or both guarantees that one will never benefit oneself.

Firstly, there is correct insight, which distinguishes between the degrees of love and hatred for something. It enables one to prefer the more beloved over the less beloved and bear the less hated to escape what is more hated. This is the fundamental function of the mind, and no one who does the opposite is considered sensible. Animals may be better off than such a person.

Secondly, there is the strength of determination and patience, which enables one to act or abstain. Often, one knows the degree of disparity. However, the weakness of the self, zeal, and determination refuses to let one prefer what is more beneficial. This results from greed, covetousness, the self's lowliness, and the shallowness of one's ambitions.

People like these benefit neither themselves nor others. Allah (ﷻ) withholds leadership in the religion from everyone except those with patience and certainty. The Most High states:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢٤)

﴿We made some of them leaders, guiding people by Our command, because they were patient and steadfast, and they believed with certainty in Our revelations.﴾ *(as-Sajdah 32: 24)*

These are the ones who benefit from their knowledge, as do others. The opposite sort of people do not benefit from their knowledge, and neither do others.

Similarly, some people benefit from their own knowledge while others do not. One type walks in their own light, and others walk in their light as well. The light of the second type has been extinguished, so they walk in darkness with whoever follows them. The third type walks in their light by themselves.

# Proper *Tawḥeed* is to Love Allah Exclusively

Correct understanding tells us it is impossible that loving the Supremely Beloved (Allah) and lusting after images ever coexist in one's heart. These are diametric opposites that will never dovetail. One will most necessarily evict the other.

For a person whose love is entirely devoted to the Supremely Beloved, loving another is vain and self-torment. Loving Allah turns such a person away from loving anything else. Even if one loves something, it is either for gaining Allah's love or is a deterrent against what crowds and decreases His love. True love entails singling out the Supremely Beloved (*tawḥeed* – the oneness of Allah) and not sharing that love between Him and others (refraining from polytheism). Allah (□) despises individuals for the latter (that is, sharing the love), distances such people from Him, and considers them liars when they claim to love Him. Even a loved creature would refuse to accept this and become jealous of others sharing that love, even though it does not deserve that love to be for it alone. Could the Supremely Beloved then accept this, when nothing should be loved but Him alone, and where loving others is torture and incurs destruction upon those who do so?

For this reason, Allah (□) does not forgive polytheism in that love; He only forgives things less than that for whomever He wishes.

Loving images deprives a person of something far more beneficial than it; it deprives a person of Allah. Success, fulfilment, and a beneficial life come through loving Him alone. A person should then choose either of these loves because they cannot be combined in a single heart.

Allah plagues those heedless of loving, remembering, and longing to meet Him with loving others. They are punished in this world, the barzakh, and the hereafter. He punishes them by making them love idols, crucifixes, kinsfolk, friends, or something else worthless and lowly. The human being is the slave of the beloved, whatever that may be. A poet states:

*You become the victim of whatever you will love,*
*So choose of your passions whatever you like.*

Those who do not take Allah as their Owner and Master take their desires as their god:

﴿أَفَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِۦ وَقَلْبِهِۦ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِۦ غِشَٰوَةً فَمَن يَهْدِيهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ (سورة الجاثية: ٢٣)

﴿Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires as his god, whom Allah causes to go astray despite his knowledge, and has sealed up his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight? Who can guide him after Allah [has abandoned him]? Will you not then pay heed?﴾ *(al-Jâthiyah 45: 23)*

At its core, enslavement boils down to love coupled with submission to the beloved. Those who love or submit to something have enslaved their heart to it. Enslavement is the furthest degree of love,[264] also called captivation. The following are the degrees of love:

## -1-

The first degree of love is connection (*'ilâqah*). It was named so because the lover's heart is connected to the beloved.

A poet states:

*I became connected to Laylâ while she was still a girl,*
*Before the bosoms of all those her age had any form.*

Another states:

*A connection you seek, O mother of al-Waleed,*
*Even after your hair is white like the clouds?*

## -2-

The next degree is the outpour of love (*ṣabâbah*). It was named so because love in the heart 'flows' towards or is poured upon the beloved.

*The lovers complained of love's flow*
*While I wished to bear what they endure single-handedly.*
*My heart would have felt the glee of love entirely,*
*No lover would have tasted it before or after me.*

## -3-

The next degree is passion (*gharâm*) when love locks into the heart and is never separated from it. The debtor was thus named *ghareem* for being bound to the partner (in the transaction). Also connected with it is the term of the Most High:

﴿ ... إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا ﴿٦٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦٥)

﴿…Verily its punishment is unrelenting [*gharâmâ*].﴾ *(al-Furqân 25: 65)*

Modern people are fond of using this term for love, though you hardly find it in the classical poetry of the Arabs.

## -4-

Next, there is ‘ishq which is excessive love. For this reason, the Lord is not described with this word and it is not used for Him.[265]

## -5-

The next degree is longing (*shawq*), where the heart is incessantly journeying towards the beloved. The use of this term for the Lord is found in the hadith of ‘Ammâr ibn Yâsir. He once offered a short prayer, and when someone asked him about it, he explained that he had supplicated with the supplication of the Prophet (ﷺ):

«اللَّهُمَّ بِعِلْمِكَ الْغَيْبَ، وَقُدْرَتِكَ عَلَى الْخَلْقِ، أَحْيِنِي مَا عَلِمْتَ الْحَيَاةَ خَيْرًا لِي، وَتَوَفَّنِي إِذَا عَلِمْتَ الْوَفَاةَ خَيْرًا لِي، اللَّهُمَّ وَأَسْأَلُكَ خَشْيَتَكَ فِي الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ كَلِمَةَ الْحَقِّ فِي الرِّضَا وَالْغَضَبِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ الْقَصْدَ فِي الْفَقْرِ وَالْغِنَى، وَأَسْأَلُكَ نَعِيمًا لَا يَنْفَدُ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ قُرَّةَ عَيْنٍ لَا تَنْقَطِعُ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ الرِّضَاءَ بَعْدَ الْقَضَاءِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ بَرْدَ الْعَيْشِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ لَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى وَجْهِكَ، وَالشَّوْقَ إِلَى لِقَائِكَ فِي غَيْرِ ضَرَّاءَ مُضِرَّةٍ، وَلَا فِتْنَةٍ مُضِلَّةٍ، اللَّهُمَّ زَيِّنَّا بِزِينَةِ الْإِيمَانِ، وَاجْعَلْنَا هُدَاةً مُهْتَدِينَ.»

«*Allâhumma bi ‘ilmik al-ghayb wa qudratika ‘alal khalq, aḥyini mâ ‘alimtal-ḥayâta khayran li, wa tawaffani idhâ ‘alimtal-wafâta khayran li. Allâhumma wa as’aluka khashyataka fil-ghaybi wash-shahâdati, wa as’aluka kalimatal-ḥaqqi fir-riḍâ wal-ghaḍabi, wa as’aluk al-qaṣda fil-faqri wal-ghinâ, wa as’aluka na‘eeman lâ yanfad, wa as’aluka qurrata ‘aynin lâ tanqaṭi‘, wa as’alukar-riḍâ’ ba‘dal-qaḍâ’, wa as’aluka bard al-‘ayshi ba‘d al-mawt, wa as’aluka ladh-dhat an-nadhari ilâ wajhik, wash-shawqa ilâ liqâ’ika fee ghayri ḍarrâ’a muḍirrah, wa lâ fitnatin muḍillah. Allâhumma zayyinnâ bi zeenatil-eemân waj‘alnâ hudâtan muhtadeen.*

(O Allah, by Your knowledge of the unseen and Your ability over the creation, grant me life as long as You know that life is better for me and grant me death when You know that death is better for me. O Allah, cause me to fear You in secret and in public. I ask You to grant me a truthful word in moments of anger and contentment. I ask You for moderation in both poverty and prosperity. I ask You for unceasing enjoyment and delight. I ask You to allow me to accept what You decree for me, and I ask You for coolness in the life after death. I ask You for the delight of looking at Your Countenance, for the longing to meet You, and for protection from harmful dangers and misleading tribulations. O Allah, beautify us with the adornment of faith, and make us guides who are guided).» (Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasâ’i, Ibn Ḥibbân, Ibn Khuzaymah, and al-Ḥâkim with an authentic chain of narration)

Another report mentions, “The pious people’s longing [shawq] to meet Me is great, and My longing [shawq] to meet them is greater.”[266]

This meaning is also expressed in the following report:

«Allah loves meeting those who love meeting Him.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

﴿مَن كَانَ يَرۡجُواْ لِقَآءَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ لَأٓتٖۚ ... ٥﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٥)

﴿Whoever hopes to meet his Lord, the time appointed by Allah [for that meeting] is surely coming…﴾ *(al-‘Ankaboot 29: 5)*

Regarding the above statement of the Most High, a person with insight indicated that Allah (ﷻ) knew His closest friends' intense longing to meet Him. He knew that their hearts would never become tranquil until they met Him, so He decreed a term and appointment for meeting Him to reassure their souls.

The absolute best and the most delightful life is of those who love Allah, long for Him, and are comforted by Him. Their life is the good life in reality; no life for the heart is better, more blissful, and more delightful. It is a good life that the Most High mentions:

﴿ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ ...

﴿٩٧﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٧)

﴿Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a good life...﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 97)*

This verse does not refer to the life shared collectively by the believers and disbelievers, the pious and the wicked, which includes good food, clothing, drinks, and marriage. It is often the case that Allah's enemies have much more of that than His close friends.

Allah (ﷻ) has guaranteed a good life to every person who behaves righteously. His promise is truthful, and He never breaks it.

What life is better than the one where a person's concerns are consolidated into one concern:[267] to earn Allah's pleasure. One's heart focuses on Allah and is not distracted. One's thoughts and determination that were divided in every valley come together. Then remembering, being comforted by, and loving and longing for the Supremely Beloved overwhelms them. One's concerns, will, aims, and even the passing thoughts of one's heart revolve around it. When one is silent, one's silence is by Allah. When one utters something, one's utterance is by Allah. When one listens, one's listening is by Allah, and when one looks, one's looking is

by Him. Likewise, one's striking, walking, movement, and stillness are all by Him. One's life, death, and resurrection are all by Him.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said that his Lord, the Blessed and High, says:

«My slaves draw nearer to Me by performing obligatory acts; this is most beloved to Me. My slaves continue coming closer to Me with additional good deeds until I love them. When I love them, I become their hearing with which they hear; their sight with which they see; their hands with which they strike; and their feet with which they walk. (By Me, they hear, by Me, they see, by Me, they strike, and by Me, they walk.)[268] If they ask of Me, I will surely give to them, and if they seek refuge with Me, I will surely protect them. I do not hesitate about anything the way I hesitate to take the souls of My believing slaves who hate death, and I hate hurting them, but I must.» (Bukhari)

Every dim-natured, obstinate individual fails to understand this noble divine hadith's intended meaning. It indicates that the means to His love comprise two matters: performing His obligations and drawing nearer to Him through voluntary acts.

Allah (□) informs that performing obligations is the most beloved thing by which those seeking nearness to Him draw close. Next are voluntary acts. Those who love Him continue increasing their voluntary acts until they become beloved to Allah.

Once they become loved by Allah, that love of Allah leads to another love. They now love Allah above the first love. This love occupies their hearts, so they think about or are concerned with none other than the Supremely Beloved. It takes over their souls and leaves no room whatsoever for other than their Beloved. The remembrance, love, and lofty description of their Beloved capture the reins of their hearts. It takes over their souls, just as anything beloved takes over its genuine lover who gathers their love entirely for it.

Without a doubt, when these lovers hear, they hear through their Supremely Beloved. When they see, they see through Him. When they strike, they strike through Him. When they walk, they walk through Him. He is in their heart, accompanying them and befriending them. This companionship has no equal and is not realized merely through knowledge and information. The matter is truly experienced, and it is not simply factual.

Even the creation knows what happens when someone loves another created being, even though they were neither created loving them nor for that. A lover states:

*Your shadow is in my eye, your mention is in my mouth,*
*Your residence is my heart, so how are you absent?*

Another poet mentions:

*It is amazing that I yearn for them, and ask everyone,*
*I meet them, while they are by my side.*
*My eye seeks them while they are in its depths,*
*My heart longs for them, while within me they reside.*

This is more subtle than another who states:

*If I say you are absent, my heart will not believe me,*
*For in it, you remain, where secrets are stowed.*
*If I say you are here, my eyes will say it is a lie.*
*Between truth and lying, confusion was bestowed.*

Nothing is closer to lovers than their beloved. Perhaps the love becomes entrenched so deeply within them that it becomes closer than their own selves. They may forget themselves, but they do not forget their lover. A poet mentions:

*I wish to forget her, but the display,*
*Of Laylâ stands before me in every pathway.*

Another bemoans:

*I wish my heart could forget you once and for all,*
*Yet my soul refuses that you leave its wall.*

The hadith above mentions hearing, sight, hands, and feet because these faculties are the tools of perception and action. Hearing and sight present what is liked and hated by the heart. They evoke love and hatred within it, and consequently, the hands and feet are used. If Allah is with someone when they hear and see, the person has been safeguarded in the faculties of perception, love, and hatred. They have been safeguarded when striking and walking.

Notice how He mentions that only the hearing, sight, hands, and feet are safeguarded but not the tongue. If this applies to hearing, which occurs intentionally sometimes and unintentionally other times, and likewise to seeing, which may occur suddenly and unintentionally, and likewise to the motions of the hand and foot, which the slave cannot do without, how about the activity of the tongue which only takes place intentionally, and which the slave can do without except when he is commanded regarding it? Also, the tongue's expression of the heart is more precise than that of all the other limbs, for it is its translator and messenger.

Notice how Allah accompanies His slaves when they hear, see, strike, and walk:

«I am their hearing with which they hear, their sight with which they see, their hands with which they strike, and their feet with which they walk.» (Bukhari)

It reiterates His being with His slaves. They are with Him in perception via hearing and seeing and in motions via hands and feet.

He did not say, "For Me, they hear, for Me they see, and for Me, they walk…" Some may presume the latter is more appropriate for this context

as it indicates the objective. Also, these matters occurred for Allah, which is more significant than those occurring by Him.

However, this assumption is incorrect. The letter *bâ'* here is not solely for denoting aid,[269] since the motions and perceptions of the pious and wicked alike are only possible when Allah enables them. The *bâ'* here indicates companionship. In other words, they only hear, see, strike, and walk, while Allah is their Companion Who is with them. This is just like His phrase in another hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah:

«I am with My slaves whenever they remember Me, and their two lips move when they mention Me.» (Recorded by Ibn al-Mubârak, Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqi, and Ibn Ḥibbân, with an authentic chain of narration)[270]

This is that special companionship by Allah:

﴿ ... لَا تَحۡزَنۡ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَنَاۖ ... ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة التوبة: ٤٠)

﴿…Do not worry; verily Allah is with us…﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 40)*

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Do you not think that two people are secure when Allah is with them?» (Bukhari and Muslim)

﴿ ... وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٦٩)

﴿…for verily Allah is with the doers of good.﴾ *(al-'Ankaboot 29: 69)*

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَواْ وَّٱلَّذِينَ هُم مُّحۡسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٢٨)

﴿Verily, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who do good.﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 128)*

﴿ ... وَٱصۡبِرُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنفال: ٤٦)

﴿…And be steadfast, for Allah is with those who are steadfast.﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 46)*

﴿ قَالَ كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٦٢)

﴿Moosâ said: No indeed! Verily, my Lord is with me and He will guide me.﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 62)*

Allah tells Moosâ and Hâroon:

﴿ قَالَ لَا تَخَافَآ ۖ إِنَّنِي مَعَكُمَآ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة طه: ٤٦)

﴿Allah said: Fear not; verily I am with you both. I hear and see [everything].﴾ *(Ṭâ Hâ 20: 46)*

The *bâ'* indicates this companionship as opposed to the *lâm* (which indicates sincerity). A person will neither attain sincerity, patience or reliance nor become a true servant of the Lord without this *bâ'* – meaning this companionship (with Allah).

Only when Allah is with His slaves are their hardships and difficulties eased and their fears transformed into security. When He is with them, everything distant is brought close and their concerns, depressions, and worries depart. The only time they experience worry, concern or grief is when He is not with them, where the heart becomes like a fish out of water, tumbling and squirming until it returns to the water.

When the slaves are in harmony with their Lord by doing what He loves, the Lord is in harmony with His slaves by granting their needs and requests:

«If they ask of Me, I will surely give to them; if they seek refuge with Me, I will surely protect them.» (Bukhari)

In other words, they fulfilled what I ordained by observing My commands and drawing closer to Me with what I love. Therefore, I will

fulfil their hopes when they ask of Me and protect them from their fears when they seek My protection.

This harmony strengthens from both sides until the Lord hesitates to put His slave to death. His slaves hate death, and the Lord hates whatever His slaves hate and (hates) to harm them. From this angle, He hates to put them to death, but their welfare is in that only. He only puts them to death to grant them eternal life and only makes them ill to grant them health. He only makes them poor to enrich them, and He only deprives them to give them. He only expelled them from paradise while they were in the back of their father (Adam) to eventually return them to it.

This is the Supreme Beloved in reality and no one else. If every hair on the slave were filled with complete love for Allah, that would be just a fraction of what He deserves from him.

*Send your heart forth wherever you may desire,*
*After the first love, no love ever really exists.*
*How many places on earth the lad finds cosy,*
*Yet longing for his first home forever persists.*

## -6-

The last degree of love is captivation (*tatayyum*). It is the lover becoming enslaved with the beloved, and it is said that people are captivated by love when enslaved by it. From this comes (the name) Taymullâh, which means ‘Abdullâh (the slave of Allah).

The reality of ‘ibâdah (enslavement) is humility and surrender to the beloved. The phrase “a *mu‘abbad* road” means one that has been humbled and smoothened by the footsteps. In that vein, Allah’s slaves are humbled by their love and humility for the Supremely Beloved. In this respect,

‘ibâdah is the noblest, loftiest station for people. No station is nobler for them than this.

In the noblest contexts (in the Qur’an), Allah (□) celebrates His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) as an ‘abd (slave) alongside identifying him as the most honourable and beloved creature to Him. This conjunction (of merits) is found when declaring his prophethood, his capacity as a caller to Islam, and in connection with al-Isrâ’ (the Night Journey)’:

﴿وَأَنَّهُۥ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا۟ يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا ﴿١٩﴾﴾ (سورة الجن: ١٩)

﴿When the slave of Allah stood up to call upon Him alone [and called others to do likewise], almost all of them banded together to oppose him.﴾ *(al-Jinn 72: 19)*

﴿وَإِن كُنتُمْ فِى رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا۟ بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِۦ ... ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٣)

﴿And if you are in doubt concerning what We have revealed to Our slave, then produce a soorah like it...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 23)*

﴿سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِۦ لَيْلًا مِّنَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ إِلَى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْأَقْصَا ٱلَّذِى بَٰرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُۥ ... ﴿١﴾﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ١)

﴿Glory be to Him Who took His slave for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Distant Mosque, the environs of which We have blessed...﴾ *(al-Isrâ’ 17: 1)*

It is also mentioned in the hadith of intercession:

«Go to Muhammad, a slave whose previous and future sins Allah has forgiven.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) attained the station of intercession. That was due to his complete enslavement to Allah and His complete forgiveness for him.

Allah (ﷻ) enslaved the creation to Him only, not to any form of partner with Him. This entails the most complete type of love, humility, and submission. This is the reality of Islam and the religion of Ibrâheem. Those who turn away from it have made fools of themselves:

﴿وَمَن يَرْغَبُ عَن مِّلَّةِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ إِلَّا مَن سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُۥ ۚ وَلَقَدِ ٱصْطَفَيْنَٰهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥٓ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِى قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٣٠-١٣٣)

﴿And who turns away from the religion of Ibrâheem but one who debases himself with folly? We chose him in this world, and in the hereafter he will be among the righteous. [Remember] when his Lord said to him: Submit [to Me], he said: I submit to the Lord of the worlds. And Ibrâheem enjoined his sons to do the same, as did Ya‘qoob [saying]: O my sons, Allah has chosen this religion for you; so do not die except as Muslims. Or were you present when death came to Ya‘qoob? He said to his sons: What will you worship after I am gone? They said: We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, of Ibrâheem, Ismâ‘eel and Is-ḥâq – One God, and To Him we submit [as Muslims].﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 130-133)*

For this reason, polytheism is one of the greatest sins, and Allah does not forgive those who associate others with Him. The basis of association with Allah is allowing partners in His love:

﴿وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ ...﴿١٦٥﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٦٥)

﴿Yet there are some people who take [for worship] others besides Allah, as equals [with Allah]; they love them as they should love Allah. But those who believe have greater love for Allah…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 165)*

Here (in this verse), Allah informs us that some human beings are guilty of polytheism by taking others beside Him as equals and loving them as they love Allah. He also informs us that those who believe are stronger in love for Allah than the idolaters for their idols.

It was said: Rather, this (verse) means that their love for Allah is stronger than the idolaters' love for Him. Even if the idolaters love Allah, they share their love for Him with their idols. This weakens their love for Him. Those who single Allah out make their love exclusively for Him; their love for Him is stronger than the idolaters' love. As previously mentioned, ascribing equals to the Lord of the worlds and making Him equal to others happens (most often) in terms of love.

Since Allah desires that His creation must love Him exclusively, He severely condemns those who take others as protectors or intermediaries. He mentions them together on one occasion, and He also mentions each separately:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۖ يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ ۖ مَا مِن شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾﴾ (سورة يونس: ٣)

﴿Verily, your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and then rose over the Throne [in a manner that befits His Majesty], directing all things. No one can intercede except with His permission. Such is Allah your Lord, so worship Him. Will you not then pay heed?﴾ *(Yoonus 10: 3)*

﴿ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۖ مَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٤)

﴿It is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in six days, and then rose over the Throne [in a manner that befits His Majesty]. You have no protector or intercessor to deliver you from His [punishment]. Will you not then pay heed?﴾ *(as-Sajdah 32: 4)*

﴿ وَأَنذِرْ بِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَن يُحْشَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ لَيْسَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ وَلِىٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ٥١)

﴿Warn hereby those who fear being gathered to their Lord, when they will have no protector or intercessor to deliver them from [the punishment of] Allah, so that they may become pious.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 51)*

﴿ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ شُفَعَآءَ ۚ قُلْ أَوَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ قُل لِّلَّهِ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ جَمِيعًا ۖ لَّهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الزُّمَر: ٤٣-٤٤)

﴿Rather they [the disbelievers] have taken [their false gods] as intercessors without Allah's leave. Say: What, [could they intercede] even though they have no power at all and are devoid of reason? Say: All intercession belongs to Allah alone [and no one can intercede except by His leave]; to Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, then to Him you will be brought back.﴾ *(az-Zumar 39: 43-44)*

﴿ مِّن وَرَآئِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَلَا يُغْنِى عَنْهُم مَّا كَسَبُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا مَا ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الجاثية: ١٠)

﴿Ahead of them is hell; neither their gains nor those whom they take as protectors other than Allah will avail them anything, and theirs will be a grievous punishment.﴾ *(al-Jâthiyah 45: 10)*

When people become allies with the Lord, He appoints intercessors and establishes allegiance between them and His believing slaves. They become allies for Allah's sake, as opposed to those who take a creature as their ally instead of Allah. These are two separate issues.

False intercession that involves polytheism is one issue. Proper intercession that is only attained through monotheism is another issue. It is the determining factor between the monotheists and the polytheists, and Allah guides whomever He wishes to the straight path.

True enslavement (to Allah) does not happen when one loves others as one should love Allah. The latter differs from loving someone for Allah because that comes from love (for Him) and is necessitated by it. Without loving the Messenger (ﷺ) – rather, without giving love for him precedence over one's life, parents, and children – one's faith is incomplete. Loving him is from loving Allah; the same is with every love for Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«There are three (elements); whoever has them tastes the sweetness of faith.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

In another wording:

«None tastes the sweetness of faith except those who have these three qualities: Allah and His Messenger are more beloved to them than everything else. They love someone only for the sake of Allah. They would hate to return to disbelief after Allah has saved them from it, just as they would hate being thrown into hellfire.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Also, Abu Umâmah reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Those who love for Allah, hate for Allah, give for Allah, and withhold for Allah are the ones who have perfected their faith.» (Recorded by Abu Dâwood, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and al-Baghawi with a reliable chain of narration)

In another hadith, narrated by ʻAbdullâh ibn Masʻood, it is mentioned:

«No two men or two women love one another for Allah without the better one being the one with a stronger love for the other.» (Recorded by Bukhari [in *al-Adab al-Mufra*d], al-Baghawi, al-Ḥâkim, aṭ-Ṭayâlisi, Abu Yaʻlâ, and Ibn Ḥibbân; according to al-ʻIrâqi, it has an authentic chain of narration)

This love sprouts from loving Allah and is necessitated by it. Whenever this love is stronger, its origin is as well.

There are four types of love, and we must differentiate between them. People go astray only because they do not differentiate between them.

1. **Loving Allah**: However, this alone is not enough to be saved from His punishment and attain His reward. That is because the pagans, worshippers of the cross, the Jews, and others also love Allah.
2. **Loving what Allah loves**: This admits people to Islam and removes them from disbelief. The most beloved people to Allah uphold this love the most and are strongest in it.
3. **Loving for Him**: This is necessitated by loving what He loves. Correctly loving what He loves is impossible without loving for Him or His sake.
4. **Loving people or things alongside Allah**: This love constitutes polytheism. Whoever loves something alongside Allah (not for Allah or because of Allah) has set up an equal to Him. This is the love of the polytheists.

There is a fifth type of love that is not part of our discussion: natural love. It refers to human inclination to what suits one's nature, such as the thirsty loving water, the hungry loving food, loving sleep, loving the spouse

and children, and so on. These are not dispraised unless they distract from the remembrance of Allah or keep a person from loving Him:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُلۡهِكُمۡ أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُكُمۡ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ ... ٩﴾

(سورة المنافقون: ٩)

﴿O you who believe, do not let your wealth and your children distract you from the remembrance of Allah…﴾ *(al-Munâfiqoon 63: 9)*

﴿رِجَالٞ لَّا تُلۡهِيهِمۡ تِجَٰرَةٞ وَلَا بَيۡعٌ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ ... ٣٧﴾ (سورة النور: ٣٧)

﴿Men who are not distracted by buying or selling from the remembrance of Allah…﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 37)*

## -7-

Finally, there is *khullâh*, which entails the most complete, the furthest epitome of love. With it, no room remains in the heart for loving another. This special degree of love does not allow any sharing whatsoever. This level of love is particular to Ibrâheem and Muhammad (ﷺ) each a khaleel (special friend) of Allah – may the praise and peace of Allah be upon them both.

Jundub reported that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

«Verily, Allah has taken me as His khaleel just as He took Ibrâheem as His khaleel.» (Muslim)

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also said:

«Were I to take anyone on earth as a khaleel, it would have been Abu Bakr. Allah has taken me, your Companion, as His khaleel.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

In another hadith, it is mentioned that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«I do not have any human being as a khaleel.» (Muslim)

Ibrâheem (□) asked for a son and was granted one. His love for his son became embedded in his heart, occupying its branch. The Supreme Beloved became jealous because His khaleel had room in his heart for someone other than Him, so He commanded him to slaughter his son.[271] The command was given in a dream to make it a greater test and tribulation.

The objective was not to slaughter the son. The objective was to 'slaughter' the son from Ibrâheem's heart to make his heart solely for his Lord. The objective was reached when His khaleel rushed to comply and gave precedence to loving his Lord over loving his son. The command to slaughter was repealed, and he was ransomed with a great (ram for) sacrifice.

The Lord never commands something and then annuls it altogether. He always retains or replaces part of it, just as He retained the practice of sacrificial animals. He retained the recommendation of giving charity before addressing the Messenger (ﷺ). He retained the five obligatory prayers after reducing them from fifty, with the same reward, as reported in the hadith from Anas:

«My word does not change; there are five prayers to perform, but the reward is equivalent to fifty.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Some mistaken individuals ignorantly presume that love is more complete than khullah. They say Ibrâheem is Allah's khaleel, but Muhammad (ﷺ) is Allah's beloved.

Love is general, but khullah is specific, and khullah is the epitome of love.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) informed us that Allah had taken him as His khaleel, just as He took Ibrâheem as His khaleel. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

also denied having any khaleel besides his Lord. Yet, he also informed us of his love for ‘Â’ishah, her father,[272] ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, and others.

﴿ ... إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلتَّوَّٰبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٢٢)

﴿…Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and He loves those who purify themselves.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 222)*

﴿ ... وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٤٦)

﴿…And Allah loves those who are steadfast.﴾ *(Âl ‘Imrân 3: 146)*

﴿ ... وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٤٨)

﴿…For Allah loves those who do good.﴾ *(Âl ‘Imrân 3: 148)*

﴿ ... إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٤٢)

﴿…For Allah loves those who are just.﴾ *(al-Mâ’idah 5: 42)*

A repentant youth is also beloved to Allah.

As for His khullah, it is specific to each khaleel mentioned above. This presumption (that love is more complete than khullah) only came from people’s lack of knowledge and understanding about Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

It has been previously mentioned that one only gives up what one loves and desires for something that one loves and desires more. Similarly, one may do what one hates in order to attain something beloved or to escape something one hates even more. The mind especially prefers the stronger love over the weaker and the less hated over the more hated. This is also dependent on the strength of the love and hate.

All this cannot be achieved without two matters: strength of perception and courage of the heart. Foolishly acting upon anything other than this may be for one of two reasons. It may be due to a weakness in

perception. That is because one cannot properly assess the levels of love and hate. It may also be due to a weak self and an incompetent heart which refuses to prefer what is better despite knowing it. Once a person's perception sharpens, the inner self strengthens, and the heart musters the courage to prefer the more beloved and the less hated, one is granted the means to prosperity.

In certain humans, desires are stronger than the mind and faith, and the stronger vanquishes the weaker. There are others whose minds and faith are stronger than their desires.

When doctors advise the ill not to consume what harms them, the carnal self and their desires insist on having it. They give precedence to their desires over their minds. Doctors call it a lack of self-respect. In the same way, many sick at heart give precedence to what increases their diseases due to a strong desire for it.

The origins of evil are the weakness of perception and the weakness and lowliness of the self. Similarly, the origins of good are the fullness of perception, strength, nobility, and the bravery of the self.

Love and determination are the source and beginning of everything that is done, and hatred is the source and beginning of everything that is not done. These two strengths in the heart are the source of a person's prosperity and doom.

A voluntary act does not exist without its cause, which is love and determination. 'Not acting' occurs when its cause is absent and its deterrent, hatred, is present. This applies to all the commands, prohibitions, and self-restraint upon which reward and punishment are contingent. There is a discrepancy regarding whether 'not acting' falls under the classification of existence or non-existence (of an action).

The correct stance is that not doing something can be categorized into two types:

1. Not doing it because of the absence of its causes constitutes non-existence.
2. A deterrent preventing it from being done constitutes existence.

A being's voluntary preference for doing or not doing something is based either on the enjoyed benefit acquired through attaining the objective or on the cure and pain relief acquired through avoiding it. For this reason, they say (about satisfaction), "The breast is cured, and so is the heart."

This objective is sought by every sensible person, even by animals, but most people make a horrendous mistake. They seek to attain pleasure through something that results in the greatest pain. They assume they will find enjoyment in the soul, but instead, they hurt it, making their hearts miserable with what brings them the greatest disease.

This happens to those whose sights are focused on the immediate and have not considered the repercussions. The role of the mind is to foresee the consequences. The most sensible person is the one who prefers the later, permanent pleasure and comfort over the immediate, fleeting and deficient pleasures. The most foolish creature sells eternal bliss, unending good life, and the pinnacle of an unspoiled and perfect pleasure. They do so in exchange for a momentary pleasure spoiled with pains and fears that quickly perish and will soon terminate.

A scholar states:

> I have thought about what sensible people strive for. I found that all their striving is for one aim, even if their roads toward achieving it vary. They all strive to repel worries and stress from themselves. One does so through food and drink, trade and business, marriage, songs and music, or leisure and play. My response is that this is the aim of the sensible, but not all these roads achieve it. Most of them probably achieve the opposite.

> Out of all the roads, nothing achieves this aim except turning to Allah, dealing with only Him, and preferring His pleasure above everything. If the travellers on this road miss out on their share of this world, they come away with the loftiest share [in paradise], which means they do not miss out on anything. Those who attain it will attain everything. However, those who miss out on it will miss everything, even if they have attained the most delightful share of this world. Nothing is more beneficial for people than this road, and nothing leads them better to their pleasure, bliss, and prosperity. From Allah comes all success.

Something can be loved for itself or another. Something loved for another must eventually arrive at what is loved for itself to avoid the impossible (endless) loop. Everything that is loved other than the Supremely Beloved comes under 'another'. Nothing is loved for itself except Allah alone. The love of everything else essentially stems from loving the Lord, such as loving His angels, Prophets, and closest friends. They essentially stem from loving Him and loving them entails loving Him because loving any beloved necessitates loving whatever they love. This point requires careful focus since it distinguishes between beneficial love for another and love that does not bring benefit and may cause harm.

Nothing is loved for itself except the One Whose inherent qualities include perfection, divinity, and Lordship. Everything else is hated because it is opposed to and inconsistent with what He loves; the hatred depends on the strength of its opposition and inconsistency. More hated are individuals whose qualities, actions, intentions, and so on are more contrary to what He loves. This just scale weighs the degree of one's agreement, disagreement, and alliance with the Lord and the degree of one's disavowal of Him.

When we find an individual loving what the Lord hates and hating what He loves, we learn that the person has a degree of enmity for Him. Conversely, we may find an individual loving what the Lord loves and hating what He hates. Whenever something is more beloved to the Lord, it becomes more loved and preferred by that person. Whenever something is

more hated by Him, it becomes more hated and distanced by that person. From this, we learn the degree of allegiance a person holds with the Lord.

Hold onto this principle regarding yourself and others. *Wilâyah* (allegiance) means agreeing with *al-Wali al-Ḥameed*[273] in what He loves and hates. It does not mean abundant fasting, praying, remaining hungry or other religious duties and practices.

Whatever is loved for another is also of two types:

1. The first is what the lover is delighted to perceive or attain.
2. The second is what pains the lover but is endured because it leads to the beloved, just like drinking bitter medicine.

The Most High states:

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرۡهٞ لَّكُمۡۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكۡرَهُواْ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُوَ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تُحِبُّواْ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُوَ شَرّٞ لَّكُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ وَأَنتُمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ٢١٦﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢١٦)

﴿Fighting is prescribed for you, even though you dislike it. But it may be that you dislike a thing although it is good for you, and that you like a thing although it is bad for you. Allah knows, and you do not know.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 216)*

Allah informs us that fighting is hated but is better for us because it leads to the favour of the greatest, the most beneficial Supremely Beloved. Our carnal self loves rest, sleep, and luxury, but they are worse because they lead to missing out on the Supremely Beloved.

Intelligent people do not look at or prefer the immediate pleasure of the beloved, nor do they look at or shun the immediate pain of the hated. They know this could (ultimately) be worse for them; it could even bring them the severest pain and deprive them of the greatest pleasure. The

intelligent people of the world endure detestable hardships because of the pleasure that ensues, even if it is transient.

All matters have four circumstances:

1. The hated that leads to what is hated.
2. The hated that leads to what is loved.
3. The loved that leads to what is loved.
4. The loved that leads to what is hated.

The loved that leads to what is loved calls for doing it from both directions. The hated that leads to what is hated calls for leaving it from both directions. The remaining two circumstances have forces pulling from both directions, and they are the battlefield for trial and tribulation. The carnal self prefers what suits it, that is, the immediate. However, faith and a sound mind prefer something more beneficial and lasting. The heart is between these two forces, sometimes heading one way and at other times the opposite way.

Here is the stage for trials, both legislative and universal. At every moment, faith and the sound mind call out, "Come to success! In the morning, those who travelled by night are praised!"[274] At death, the pious slave is praised! If the night buries one's love (of Allah) and the strength of desires overtakes one, one urges the carnal self to be patient and says, "It is nothing but an hour that will soon end, and then all this pain will subside."

If love is the driving force behind every right and wrong action, then the basis of every religious act is love of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). Likewise, the basis of every (religious) statement is belief in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). Every will (motive) contending with loving Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), either completely or partially, and every doubt contending with belief in Allah threatens one's faith or (at least) weakens it.

If this (threat) strengthens until it opposes the fundamental basis of love (for) and belief (in Allah), it becomes disbelief or major polytheism. If it does not fundamentally oppose it but hinders its completeness, it will weaken one's (religious) will and determination. It will impede the enterer (upon Allah), disable the seeker, and dishearten the ambitious.

Allegiance is invalid without enmity (to necessitate it), just as the Most High states about the leader of the *Ḥaneef* (Ibrâheem) declaring to his people:

﴿ قَالَ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُمُ ٱلْأَقْدَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِّىٓ إِلَّا رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٧٥-٧٧)

﴿He said: Then do you see those which you have been worshipping, you and your forefathers? Verily, they are enemies to me, except the Lord of the worlds.﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 75-77)*

It was only possible for the khaleel of Allah to reach this allegiance and khullah by actualizing this enmity. Allegiance is only for Allah, and this allegiance can only exist through the disavowal of everything that is worshipped besides Him:

﴿ قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُا۟ مِنكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةُ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥٓ ... ﴿٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الممتحنة: ٤)

﴿Verily, you have a good example in Ibrâheem and those who were with him, when they said to their people: Verily, we disown you and whatever you worship besides Allah. We renounce you, and there has arisen between us and you enmity and hatred forever, until you believe in Allah alone…﴾ *(al-Mumtaḥanah 60: 4)*

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّنِى بَرَآءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةًۢ بَاقِيَةً فِى عَقِبِهِۦ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الزُّخرُف: ٢٦-٢٨)

﴿And [remember] when Ibrâheem said to his father and his people: I disavow all that you worship, except Him Who created me; He will surely guide me. And he left it as a word to endure among his progeny, so that they might come back [to it].﴾ *(az-Zukhruf 43: 26-28)*

In other words, he (Ibrâheem) made this allegiance to Allah and rejected everything worshipped besides Him. He made this a word remaining with his progeny. It has been inherited by the Prophets and their followers from one another. It is the statement: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh* (none is worthy of worship except Allah). The followers of the Imam of the Ḥaneef (Ibrâheem) inherited it from him until the Day of Resurrection.

It is the statement for which the heavens and earth were created, and Allah predisposed the creatures to follow it. Upon it, the religion was established, the qibla was established, and the swords of jihad were unsheathed. It is the exclusive right of Allah upon all His slaves. This statement secures blood, wealth, and offspring in this life; it is the rescuer from the punishment of the grave and the hellfire. It is the identification card without which none enters paradise. It is the rope to hold onto, without which one cannot reach Allah.

It is the statement of Islam and the key to the abode of peace (paradise). Based on this statement, people are divided into the doomed or the prosperous, the accepted or exiled. Based on it, one can differentiate between the lands of disbelief and faith and between the abode of bliss and misery and disgrace. This essential column qualifies the *farḍ* (mandatory) and the *sunnah* (recommended). The one whose last words are *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh* enters paradise.[275]

The soul and secret of this statement is singling out the Lord, Whose (deserved) praise is majestic, whose names are sacred and blessed, and Whose power is exalted. Besides Him, nothing else is worthy of worship with love, exaltation, grandeur, fear, hope, reliance, devotion, inclination, and intimidation. We should love none but Him, and anything else loved besides Him is only loved as a result of loving Him or because it increases our love for Him. We should fear none but Him, have hope only in Him, rely only upon Him, seek Him, and fear only Him. We should swear only by His Name, vow only to Him, repent only to Him, and obey nothing except His command. We should anticipate nothing except through Him, seek strength during difficulty only in Him, seek refuge only in Him, and prostrate to none but Him. We should only slaughter for Him and in His name. All this is combined in a single statement: None but Him is worshipped with every act of worship. That is the reality behind the testimony: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*.

For this reason, Allah has forbidden hellfire from (punishing) anyone who truly testifies that none is worthy of worship but Allah. It is impossible for someone who actualizes the reality of this testimony and upholds it to enter hellfire:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِشَهَٰدَٰتِهِمۡ قَآئِمُونَ ٣٣﴾ (سورة المعارج: ٣٣)

﴿[Those] who are upright in their testimonies.﴾ *(al-Ma'ârij 70: 33)*

Such people uphold their testimony outwardly and inwardly, in their hearts and with their limbs. There are some human beings whose testimony is dead and others whose testimony sleeps but awakens if roused. There are those whose testimony lies down and those whose testimony is closer to standing. Its station in the heart is that of the soul within the body. Some souls are dead, some are ill and closer to death, some closer to life, and some are healthy and maintain the welfare of the body.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and Uthmân (□)[276] reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«I know a word. The soul of every slave (of Allah) who says this at death finds comfort from this statement.» (An authentic hadith recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, Ibn Ḥibbân, Abu Nu‘aym, Ibn Khuzaymah, and Ibn al-Bannâ’ with a strong chain of narration)

The soul’s life is contingent upon the life of this statement within it, just as the body’s life is contingent upon the existence of the soul within it. Whoever dies uttering this statement lives luxuriously in paradise. The soul of whoever lives upon actualizing and upholding it lives lavishly in paradise. Also, it enjoys the best of lives (on earth):

﴿وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾﴾

(سورة النازعات: ٤٠-٤١)

﴿But as for the one who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from base desires, verily paradise will be his abode.﴾ *(an-Nâzi‘ât 79: 40-41)*

Paradise is one’s haven on the Day of Meeting. Also, the paradise of knowing, loving, and being comforted by Allah, longing to meet Him, and enjoying contentment with Him becomes the haven of one’s soul in this world. Whoever is deprived of this paradise (on earth) is even more deprived of that paradise (in the hereafter). The righteous are in delight, even during the difficulties of life in this world. In contrast, the wicked are in the blaze, even if this world offers all opportunities for them:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ ...

﴿٩٧﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٧)

﴿Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a good life...﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 97)*

The good life is the paradise of this world:

﴿فَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَهۡدِيَهُۥ يَشۡرَحۡ صَدۡرَهُۥ لِلۡإِسۡلَٰمِۖ وَمَن يُرِدۡ أَن يُضِلَّهُۥ يَجۡعَلۡ صَدۡرَهُۥ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا ... ﴿١٢٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١٢٥)

﴿Whoever Allah wills to guide, He opens his heart to Islam, and whomever He wills to leave astray, He closes and constricts his heart…﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 125)*

What delight is better than an expanded chest? What punishment is worse than a constricted chest?

﴿أَلَآ إِنَّ أَوۡلِيَآءَ ٱللَّهِ لَا خَوۡفٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ يَحۡزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَكَانُواْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ لَهُمُ ٱلۡبُشۡرَىٰ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَفِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۚ لَا تَبۡدِيلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٤﴾﴾ (سورة يونس: ٦٢-٦٤)

﴿Verily, the allies and close friends of Allah will have no fear nor will they grieve, those who believe and guard against evil. For them are glad tidings in the life of this world and in the hereafter; there can be no change in the words [promises] of Allah. That is the supreme triumph.﴾ *(Yoonus 10: 62-64)*

The believer who lives with sincerity to Allah has the best life, the most peaceful mind, the most expanded chest, and the most joyful heart. This immediate paradise precedes the future paradise.

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: When you pass by the gardens of paradise, feast (in them).

People asked: What are the gardens of paradise?

The Prophet (ﷺ) answered: Circles of remembrance (dhikr).» (A 'reliable but odd' hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi)

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«What is between my house and my pulpit is a garden from the gardens of paradise.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

When people asked him about his continuous fasting, the Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«I am not like you; I remain with my Lord, Who feeds me and gives me a drink.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Here, he informs us about the nourishment he experiences from his Lord, which is a substitute for tangible food and drink. He also explains that what he experiences is especially for him and no one shares it with him. When he abstains from eating and drinking, he has a compensation which fills its place and suffices, just as it was said:

*She has memorable stories of you that busy her,*
*From drinking and distract her from packing.*
*She has your face as a lantern to illuminate for her;*
*Your words tame her steps when walking.*
*Whenever she is pained by the burden of travelling,*
*She finds her hope in meeting you invigorating.*

Whenever something is more beneficial for someone, and their need for it is greater, the pain felt when missing it is more intense. Conversely, whenever the absence of something is more beneficial for someone, the pain resulting from its existence is more intense.

Nothing is more beneficial for a person than turning to Allah, being busy with His remembrance, being delighted with His love, and preferring it for His pleasure. The person has no life, enjoyment, happiness, or joy except with that. Its absence is the most painful thing and the severest torture. The soul only fails to notice this painful torture because it is preoccupied with something else and infatuated with it. It fails to notice the pain resulting from missing out on the thing that is most beloved and beneficial for it.

This is equivalent to the condition of drunkards. They are engrossed in their intoxication while their home, wealth, spouse, and children are burning. They do not feel pain and sorrow from the loss because their

intoxication deludes them. After they awaken, the veil of intoxication is removed. When they regain their senses following the stupor of the wine, they know best their condition at that moment.

The same happens when the veil is lifted and the first moments of the hereafter are within view. It is when one departs from this world and transitions towards Allah. The pain, sorrow, and torture at that time will be more severe.

It is only through knowing that one has been temporarily afflicted that one hopes for compensation for their worldly suffering. What about someone whose catastrophe is not compensated for, nor is anything granted in exchange, nor is the entire world comparable to it? Were Allah (□) to decree death upon him because of this sorrow and pain, it would suit the slave; death would certainly become his greatest wish and grandest sorrow. This is if the pain were solely for missing out, so what about when there is punishment for the body and soul because of countless other matters that existed?

Indeed, blessed is He Who has enabled the weak creatures to bear these two great pains, which the sturdiest mountains do not carry.

Imagine the most beloved individual in the world to you, one you cannot live contently without. One morning, that person is taken from you, and you are separated just when you need them the most. How would you be at that moment? This is while the person is very replaceable, so what about the One Whom nothing can replace?

*For everything you lose, there can be compensation,*
*Except for Allah; if you lose Him, there is no compensation.*

A report mentions:

Son of Adam, I created you to worship Me, so do not play. I sponsored your sustenance, so do not tire yourself out for this. Son of Adam, obey Me, and you will find Me. If you find Me, you have found

everything; if you missed Me, you have missed everything, and I am more beloved than everything.

Love is a genus with many sub-branches that vary in strength and description. When it comes to Allah, the word refers to different things. It is most commonly used about that (love) which is particular to Him, the types befitting of Him, and those unbefitting of Him unless they are for Him only. Examples are worship, devotion, and so on. Worship is unbefitting unless it is for Him only, as is devotion. Love may also be mentioned as an all-inclusive term:

﴿ ... فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ ... ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥٤)

﴿…Allah will bring forth [in their stead] people whom He loves and who love Him...﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 54)*

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ ... ﴿١٦٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٦٥)

﴿Yet there are some people who take [for worship] others besides Allah, as equals [with Allah]; they love them as they should love Allah. But those who believe have greater love for Allah...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 165)*

The greatest type of dispraised love involves loving (something or someone) along with Allah, where the lover equates the love for Allah with love for that rival set up beside Him. The greatest type of praised love involves loving only Allah and whatever He loves. This love is the basis and main requirement of prosperity, without which none is saved from punishment. The dispraised polytheistic love is the basis and main cause of misery. None is punished for this but the people who practise it. People will not enter hellfire if they loved Allah and worshipped Him only without ascribing partners to Him. Even those who enter it because of their sins will not remain there forever.

The Qur’an revolves around commanding this (praised) love and what it entails and forbidding the other (dispraised) love and what it entails. It presents examples and gauges for, mentions stories about, and details the actions, allies, and gods of the two types. It informs us about how He deals with these two types and their condition in the three abodes: the abode of this world, the abode of barzakh, and the abode of permanence. The Qur’an details all these types.

The essential call of all the messengers, from the first to the last, was to worship Allah only, without associating partners with Him. This means loving Him entirely, being humble and submissive to Him, and exalting and aggrandizing Him with obedience and piety.

There is the hadith of Anas, where the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, none of you are believers until I am more beloved to you than your children, parents, and all the people combined.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

It was narrated:

«‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb declared: O Messenger of Allah! By Allah, you are more beloved to me than everything except me.

He replied: No, ‘Umar. Not until I am more beloved to you than yourself.

‘Umar then declared: By the One Who sent you with the truth, you are certainly more beloved to me than me.

The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: Now ‘Umar (I am more beloved to you).» (Bukhari)

This hadith concerns loving His slave and Messenger (ﷺ) and the obligation to prefer him above one’s love for oneself, one’s children, one’s parents, and all the people combined. What about loving the One Who sent him and giving Him that preference above loving anyone else?

Loving the Lord, and singling Him out with this love, is distinct from loving others in its strength and description. The obligation is that He must become more beloved to us than our children and parents. He must become even more beloved than our hearing, sight, and soul that resides within us. The True Lord we worship must be more beloved to us than all that. Also, a matter may be loved for one aspect but not for other aspects, or it may be loved for another reason. Nothing is loved inherently and in every respect except Allah alone. Divinity befits none but Him.

﴿ لَوۡ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَاۚ ... ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٢٢)

﴿If there had been therein [in the heavens and the earth] any gods besides Allah, both realms would surely have fallen into disorder…﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 22)*

Deification is love, obedience, and humble surrender.

Every movement in the upper and lower worlds originates from love. Love is its cause and aim. That is because movements are of three types: voluntary, natural, and involuntary.

Natural movements originate from stillness. The body only moves when removed from its original, natural location in order to return to it. Its removal from its customary position happens involuntarily by stimulation from its mover. Therefore, it has an involuntary movement by which it moves upon stimulation from its mover and a natural movement by which it seeks to return to its position. Both its movements result from a stimulant, making it the origin of the two movements. Voluntary movement is the origin of the two former movements, and it results from love and will. With that, all three movements are actually resultant of love and will.

The evidence for restricting movements to these three types is that this is voluntary when the stimulated is aware of the movement. When the stimulated is unaware of it, it depends on whether it suits the person's nature. The first is natural, and the second is involuntary.

Note that the angels stimulate every movement in the heavens, earth, and what lies between them. They arrange and apportion all affairs related to: heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, the stars, the wind, the clouds, the rainfall, the vegetation, and the foetuses moving in their mothers' wombs. The Qur'an and Sunnah assert this fact in many places. Believing in it is part of the correct belief in the angels.

Allah has appointed angels for every womb, raindrop, vegetation, wind, planet, sun, moon, and star.

He has appointed four angels for every individual. They are scribes on the person's right and left and protectors both in front and behind. He has appointed angels to take the soul and prepare it for its permanent residence, either paradise or hellfire. He has also appointed angels to:

- Interrogate and test the person in the grave;
- Torture or delight the person there;
- Drive the person from the grave to the Gathering.

There are also angels to bring the punishment of the hellfire or the bliss of paradise.

Allah has also appointed angels over the mountains and angels to direct the clouds to wherever they are commanded. They send down rainfall by His command in known portions willed by Him. He has also appointed angels in paradise to plant and maintain its instruments, furnishings, garments, and everything. There are similar angels in the hellfire as well.

The greatest soldiers of Allah are the angels, and the term *malak* (angel) suggests that an angel is a messenger who carries out the commands of another. Angels do not command of their own accord; the entire command is from Allah. They manage and apportion by Allah's command and permission:

﴿ وَمَا نَتَنَزَّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ ۖ لَهُۥ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَمَا خَلْفَنَا وَمَا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴿٦٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة مريم: ٦٤)

﴿[Jibreel said:] We [angels] do not descend except by the command of your Lord. To Him belongs all that is ahead of us and all that is behind us, and all that is in between. Your Lord is never forgetful.﴾ *(Maryam 19: 64)*

﴿ ۞ وَكَم مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ لَا تُغْنِى شَفَٰعَتُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَن يَأْذَنَ ٱللَّهُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَرْضَىٰٓ ﴿٢٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة النجم: ٢٦)

﴿However many angels there may be in the heavens, their intercession will be of no avail except after Allah has given leave to whomever He wills and is pleased with.﴾ *(an-Najm 53: 26)*

He swears by groups of angels who carry out His command in the creation, as He mentions:

﴿وَٱلصَّٰٓفَّٰتِ صَفًّا ﴿١﴾ فَٱلزَّٰجِرَٰتِ زَجْرًا ﴿٢﴾ فَٱلتَّٰلِيَٰتِ ذِكْرًا ﴿٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الصافات: ١-٣)

﴿By those [angels] lined up in rows, and by those [angels] who restrain man from evil [through inspiration], and by those [angels] who recite Allah's words.﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 1-3)*

﴿وَٱلْمُرْسَلَٰتِ عُرْفًا ﴿١﴾ فَٱلْعَٰصِفَٰتِ عَصْفًا ﴿٢﴾ وَٱلنَّٰشِرَٰتِ نَشْرًا ﴿٣﴾ فَٱلْفَٰرِقَٰتِ فَرْقًا ﴿٤﴾ فَٱلْمُلْقِيَٰتِ ذِكْرًا ﴿٥﴾ عُذْرًا أَوْ نُذْرًا ﴿٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة المرسلات: ١-٦)

﴿By those [winds] sent forth in gusts. And the winds that blow violently. And [by] the winds that spread [clouds]. And those [angels] who bring criterion. And those [angels] who deliver a message. As justification or warning.﴾ *(al-Mursalât 77: 1-6)*[277]

﴿وَٱلنَّٰزِعَٰتِ غَرۡقٗا ١ وَٱلنَّٰشِطَٰتِ نَشۡطٗا ٢ وَٱلسَّٰبِحَٰتِ سَبۡحٗا ٣ فَٱلسَّٰبِقَٰتِ سَبۡقٗا ٤ فَٱلۡمُدَبِّرَٰتِ أَمۡرٗا ٥﴾ (سورة النازعات: ١-٥)

﴿By those who wrest violently, and by those who draw out gently, and by those who glide swiftly, those who press forward as in a race, and who carry out the command [of Allah].﴾ *(an-Nâzi'ât 79: 1-5)*

We have mentioned the meanings of this and the secret behind swearing by them in the book *Aqsâm al-Qur'ân*.[278]

You will now realize that all their loves, wills, and intents are an act of worship from them to the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Every natural and involuntary act is a consequence of that. Were it not for love, the planets would not orbit, nor would the stars move, the winds blow, or the condensed clouds pass. Without love, the foetus would not stir in the mother's womb, the seeds would not split into various plants, and the colossal waves of the ocean would not collide. Without love, the arranging and apportioning (angels) would not move, and the earth, the heavens, and the creatures would not exalt, praise, and glorify their Originator:

﴿تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ٱلسَّبۡعُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّۚ وَإِن مِّن شَيۡءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمۡدِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَفۡقَهُونَ تَسۡبِيحَهُمۡۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورٗا ٤٤﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٤٤)

﴿The seven heavens and the earth, and all those who are therein, glorify Him. There is not a thing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Verily, He is Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 44)*

You know that every being has a will, love, and actions that suit it and that the movement in any activity originates from that love and will. Just as a thing can only exist through its Originator, it has no welfare unless its movement and love are solely for Him.

﴿ لَوۡ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَاۚ ... ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٢٢)

﴿If there had been therein [in the heavens and the earth] any gods besides Allah, both realms would surely have fallen into disorder…﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 22)*

The Most High did not mention that they would never have existed or become non-existent. That is because He is capable of keeping them in a ruined state. Rather, they cannot be well and upright unless they and everything inhabiting them obeys Allah only.

If the universe had two gods, its structure would be ruined. Each god would have sought to overthrow the other, to ascend above him, and to be the exclusive possessor of divinity. Partnership in divinity is a deficiency that negates total divinity. A god would not accept being a deficient god himself.

If one god vanquished the other, he alone would be the god, and the vanquished would not be a god. If neither vanquished the other, this necessitates their deficiency and incompetence and not genuine divinity. In that case, another god must exist above them to control them. Otherwise, each would go off with what he created and seek supremacy over the other.

It would lead to the ruin of the heavens, the earth, and all they contain. It is known that lands are ruined when two equal sovereigns are found there; a woman is ruined when she has two husbands; and a she-camel is ruined when shared by two male camels.

Corruption in the world only originates from the quarrelling of the rulers and caliphs. That is why the enemies of Islam only had genuine hopes of destroying it when Muslim rulers became numerous, as did their disputes. Each ruler went off with their territories and sought supremacy over the others.

The perfection and uprightness of the heavens and earth, and the grand structure and fine precision of the creation, are some of the most obvious proofs that there is no deity but Allah. He is alone, without any partners. To

Him belongs all sovereignty, and to Him belongs all praise. He gives life and death and is in control over all things. Everything worshipped, from His Throne to the base of His earth, is therefore false except for His Supreme Countenance.

﴿ مَا ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِن وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُۥ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ ۚ إِذًا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَٰهٍۭ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَا
بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَتَعَٰلَىٰ
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ٩١-٩٢)

﴿Allah has never begotten a son, nor is there any god besides Him. [In that case,] each god would have taken full control of what he had created, and each would have rushed to gain supremacy over the others. Glory be to Allah and [exalted be He] far above what they ascribe [to Him]. Knower of the unseen and the seen; exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him.﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 91-92)*

﴿ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ ءَالِهَةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنشِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ
فَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾
(سورة الأنبياء: ٢١-٢٣)

﴿Or have they taken gods from the earth who can raise [the dead]? If there had been therein [in the heavens and the earth] any gods besides Allah, both realms would surely have fallen into disorder. Glory be to Allah, Lord of the Throne, and [exalted be He] far above what they ascribe [to Him]. He cannot be questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned.﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 21-23)*

﴿قُل لَّوْ كَانَ مَعَهُۥٓ ءَالِهَةٌ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذًا لَّٱبْتَغَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ ذِى ٱلْعَرْشِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٤٢)

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: If there were [other] gods with Him, as they say, they would surely have sought a way to the Lord of the Throne.﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 42)*

It means they would have sought a way to overtake and vanquish Him, just as the kings (or queens) do with one another. The following verse supports this:

﴿ ... وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ ... ﴿٩١﴾ ﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ٩١)

﴿…and each would have rushed to gain supremacy over the others...﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 91)*

Our Shaykh (Ibn Taymiyah) indicated that the correct meaning is that they would have sought a way to draw nearer to Him by obeying Him. How, then, can you worship them instead of Him? Even if they were gods, as you say, they would still be His slaves.

He explained that this is indicated from multiple angles:

1. According to the verse of the Most High:

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ ۚ ... ﴿٥٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٥٧)

﴿Those upon whom they call themselves seek nearness to their Lord, [competing to see] which of them will be nearest. They hope for His mercy and fear His punishment...﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 57)*

In other words, those you worship besides Me are My slaves, just as you are My slave, hoping for My mercy and fearing My punishment. Why, then, do you worship them instead of Me?

2. He does not state: They would seek a means against Him (*'alayhi*). He indicates:

﴿ ... إِذًا لَّٱبۡتَغَوۡاْ إِلَىٰ ذِي ٱلۡعَرۡشِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٤٢)

﴿…they would surely have sought a way to [*ilâ*] the Lord of the Throne.﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 42)*

This term is used to denote seeking nearness, just like in this verse:

﴿ ... ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱبۡتَغُوٓاْ إِلَيۡهِ ... ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣٥)

﴿…Fear Allah, seek the means of drawing closer to Him [*ilayhi*]…﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 35)*

Regarding overtaking, the term used is *'alâ* ﴿against﴾ as in this verse:

﴿ ... فَإِنۡ أَطَعۡنَكُمۡ فَلَا تَبۡغُواْ عَلَيۡهِنَّ سَبِيلًاۗ ... ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ٣٤)

﴿…Then if they obey you, take no further action against them [*'alayhin*]…﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 34)*

3. They did not say that their gods challenge Him and seek supremacy over Him. He Himself states:

﴿ ... لَّوۡ كَانَ مَعَهُۥٓ ءَالِهَةٞ ... ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٤٢)

﴿…If there were [other] gods with Him…﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 42)*

They said their gods seek nearness to Him and bring them closer to Him. Thus He indicates that if the matter were as you say, these gods would be His slaves, so why do you worship His slaves instead of Him?

Whether praised or dispraised, beneficial or harmful, love has signs, effects, necessities, and rulings. Some are passions, tastes, sweetness, longing, comfort, connection, nearness to the beloved, detachment, distance from the beloved, rejection, desertion, happiness, joy, weeping, sorrow, and others that are related to its rulings and necessitated by it.

Praiseworthy love is the beneficial love that earns its bearer benefit in both the worldly life and the hereafter, and this love embodies happiness. Its opposite is what earns its bearer harm in the worldly life and the hereafter. This is the embodiment of the person's misery.

It is known that those who are alive and sensible do not choose something harmful that makes them miserable. This can only happen due to ignorance and injustice, for the inner self may desire what does not benefit it. This is an injustice they commit against themselves. The inner self may be ignorant about its beloved and may love and desire something without knowing the harm involved in loving it. This condition is of those who follow their desires without knowledge. The inner self may also know of the harm in loving it, but it may prefer its desires over its knowledge. Also, its love may consist of both incorrect perceptions and dispraised desires. This condition is of those who follow conjecture and whatever the inner self desires.

Incorrect love only occurs through ignorance, incorrect perception, overwhelming desires, or a combination of these which support one another. This produces both doubt and desire. Doubt causes the truth to be mistaken for falsehood, beautifying the beloved and arousing a desire to attain it. The army of doubt and desire collaborate against the army of faith and sound mind. Victory will belong to the stronger of the two forces.

Everything this love necessitates has the same ruling as its leader. All that follows the beneficial, praiseworthy love which embodies the person's happiness also brings benefit, and its ruling is that of its leader. If the person cries, feels sorrow or rejoices, it brings benefit. Both refraining and indulging bring benefit, and the person rotates between these stations of love and its rulings with increased profit and nearness (to Allah).

Conversely, everything stemming from the harmful love harms its bearers and distances a person from the Lord. Whichever way the person rolls around within it and plummets in its pits, it only brings further loss and distance.

This case is with every act of obedience or sin. Acts of obedience lead to an increase and nearness for their doer, but sins lead to loss and distancing for their doer:

﴿ ... ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَلَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا مَخْمَصَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَطَـُٔونَ مَوْطِئًا يَغِيظُ ٱلْكُفَّارَ وَلَا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ عَدُوٍّ نَّيْلًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُم بِهِۦ عَمَلٌ صَٰلِحٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً وَلَا يَقْطَعُونَ وَادِيًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾ ﴾ (سورة التوبة: ١٢٠-١٢١)

﴿…That is because whenever they suffer any thirst, weariness or hunger in Allah's cause, or they take any step that angers the disbelievers or inflict any loss on an enemy, a righteous deed is recorded to their credit thereby. For Allah will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost. Nor do they spend anything [for Allah's cause], small or great, or cross any valley, but it is recorded to their credit, so that Allah may reward them in accordance with the best of their deeds.﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 120-121)*

Allah (ﷻ) informs us in the verse *(at-Tawbah 9: 120)* that whatever is generated by their obedience and good works is also written for them as righteous deeds. He then informs us in the following verse *(at-Tawbah 9: 121)* that their righteous actions, which they intentionally performed, are also written for them. The difference between the two is: the former are not their actions but result from them, and yet they were written for them as righteous acts. As for the latter, they are their actions which they chose of their own volition, and hence they are written for them as righteous actions.

Let the victims of love diligently reflect on this section to learn what is for them and what is against them.

*On the Day of Display, they will know the goods they lost;*
*Upon weighing, will they recognize their harvest.*

Love and will are the source of every action, as in the preceding discussion. Likewise, they are the basis of every religion, regardless of whether it is true or false. That is because religion is related to internal and external actions, and love and will are the source of this. Religion is about obedience, worship, and manners. It is the constant and necessary obedience that becomes a part of one's manners and character. For this reason, manners and character were interpreted to mean religion:

﴿ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة القلم: ٤)

﴿And verily you are of an exalted character.﴾ *(al-Qalam 68: 4)*

Imam Aḥmad mentions from Ibn 'Uyaynah that according to Ibn 'Abbâs, this means following a great religion.[279]

Also, when 'Â'ishah was asked about the manners of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), she said that his manners were the Qur'an. (Muslim)

The term *deen* (religion) implies the notion of humility and submission. It also carries the meaning of subservience, surrender, and obedience. For that reason, this term is rhetorically invoked in contexts of superiors to subordinates. For instance, one says *dintuhu fa dâna*, meaning: I subdued him, so he surrendered. Invoking this term about subordinates to superiors is also commonplace, such as saying *dintullâh* (I have submitted to Allah) or *dintulillâh* (I have submitted for Allah) or *lâ yadeenullâh* (He is non-compliant with Allah). Therefore, a person observing the deen of Allah literally means obeying Allah, loving Him, and fearing Him. Likewise, a person observing the deen for Allah means he is being humble, compliant, and subservient to Him.

Internal submission (deen of the heart) requires the existence of love and humility, just like with ritual devotion. External submission (deen of the limbs) does not necessitate love, even though it involves compliance and apparent humility.

Allah (□) uses the term *Yawm ad-Deen* (the Day of Recompense) for the Day of Resurrection because it is the Day when people are brought forward to be judged and repaid for their deeds. Good deeds will bring a good outcome, and evil deeds will bring an evil outcome. For this reason, it (Yawm ad-Deen) was interpreted to mean the Day of Recompense and the Day of Judgement:

﴿فَلَوۡلَآ إِن كُنتُمۡ غَيۡرَ مَدِينِينَ ٨٦ تَرۡجِعُونَهَآ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ٨٧﴾ (سورة الواقعة: ٨٦-٨٧)

﴿So why do you not, if [you think] you will not be requited [*madeeneen*], bring back [that soul], if you are telling the truth?﴾ *(al-Wâqi'ah 56: 86-87)*

In other words, why do you not return the soul to its place (at death) if you are not subjects of a dominant Lord, or not going to be recompensed?

This verse requires interpretation, for it presents evidence against their denial of resurrection and judgement. Any evidence must indicate its intended meaning through which the mind instantly transitions to that meaning because of the relationship between them. Everything that is necessitated is evidence indicating whatever necessitates it, while the opposite is not always true.[280]

The argument is that when they denied resurrection and judgement, they disbelieved in their Lord and denied His ability, lordship, and wisdom.

Either they affirm or refuse a Lord Who has power over them and deals with them as He wishes by:

- Giving death if He wills;
- Bringing them to life if He wills;
- Commanding and forbidding them;
- Rewarding the pious; and

- Punishing the wrongdoers.

If they affirm Him, (it implies that) they believe in the resurrection, gathering, commands, and recompense of religion. If they deny and disbelieve in Him, they claim that they are not under the control of the Lord and are not His subjects. They claim they do not have a Lord Who deals with them however He wishes. In that case, should they not be capable of repelling death when it comes to them? Should they not be able to return the soul to its location after it reaches the throat?

This address is to those with the dying person as they witness the death. In other words, why do you not return the soul to its place (in the body) since you are not subjects of a Lord and subordinate to the One Who is Almighty, All-Capable? Why do you not return the soul if you are not subject to the One Whose decisions and commands about you are always executed? It means they are utterly incapacitated. He establishes their incapacity to return a single soul from one place to another, even if the two races (human and jinn) gathered to do so. What a profound verse indicating His Lordship, oneness, authority over His creation, and the execution and accomplishment of His decisions!

Deen can be legislative (as in religion) and can be compensative (as in recompense). So like *dayn* (debt), we are bound to His Law (religion) and His reckoning (judgement). Both belong to Allah alone. Deen, in its entirety, therefore, belongs to Allah alone. Command, recompense, and love are the source of these two types.

What He legislates and commands are beloved and pleasing to Him. What He forbids is hateful to Him because it conflicts with what is beloved and pleasing to Him, so He loves its opposite. His legislative deen comprises His love and pleasure. The slave's deen to Allah is only accepted when it sprouts from love and pleasure, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«They have tasted faith, those who are pleased with Allah as their Lord, Islam as their deen, and Muhammad as their Messenger.» (Muslim)

This deen is upheld by love. It was legislated because of it and founded on its basis. Allah's deen of recompense entails repaying the doers of good for their excellence and the doers of evil for their wrongs. Each matter is beloved to the Lord, for they both stem from His justice and bounty. Both are from His perfect qualities; He loves His names and attributes and loves whoever loves them.

Each of the two types of deen represents His straight path which He is upon. He is upon the straight path in His commands, prohibitions, rewards, and punishments, just as He informs us that Prophet Hood (□) told his people:

﴿ ... إِنِّيٓ أُشۡهِدُ ٱللَّهَ وَٱشۡهَدُوٓاْ أَنِّي بَرِيٓءٞ مِّمَّا تُشۡرِكُونَ ٥٤ مِن دُونِهِۦۖ فَكِيدُونِي جَمِيعٗا
ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونِ ٥٥ إِنِّي تَوَكَّلۡتُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمۚ مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ ءَاخِذُۢ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآۚ
إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ٥٦ ﴾ (سورة هود: ٥٤-٥٦)

﴿…I call Allah to witness, and you too are my witnesses, that I disavow all those whom you ascribe as partners to Allah. So scheme against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is no living creature but He holds it [in His control] by its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on a straight path.﴾ *(Hood 11: 54-56)*

Hood, the Prophet of Allah, knew that his Lord was upon a straight path in His creation, command, prohibitions, rewards, punishments, decisions, decrees, withholding, granting, pardoning, trying, aiding, and forsaking. He never lacks His divine perfection, necessitated by His names and attributes. He rewards and punishes fairly through His justice, wisdom, mercy, kindness and grace. Likewise, He assists, deserts, grants, deprives, guides, and misleads appropriately, which makes Him deserving of the most complete praise.

All this granted him (Hood) knowledge and familiarity (about Allah). Thus he loudly declared to his people with firm resolve, a fearless heart,

and complete devotion to Allah: ﴿I call Allah to witness, and you too are my witnesses, that I disavow all those whom you ascribe as partners to Allah. So scheme against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is no living creature but He holds it [in His control] by its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on a straight path﴾ *(11: 54-56)*.

Then he informed them about His absolute power and ability over everyone else and how everything yields to His greatness: ﴿There is no living creature but He holds it [in His control] by its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on a straight path﴾ *(11: 56).*

He declared, "How could I fear someone when their forelock is in His Hand, and they are in His grasp and under His authority, not under their authority? Such a thing epitomizes ignorance and the most horrendous injustice."

Then he informed them that He (Allah) is upon a straight path in everything He decides and decrees. People should not be afraid that He will oppress or be unjust to them. He declared that he does not fear anyone other than Allah, or the oppression of others, since their forelocks are in His Hands and He is upon a straight path. His decision over His slaves is always executed, and His decree is always just. To Him belongs all sovereignty and praise. His dealing with His slaves is never devoid of justice and grace. Through His bounty and mercy, He gives, honours, guides, and supports. Through His justice and wisdom, He withholds, disgraces, misguides, forsakes, and dooms. He is upon a straight path in both.

ʻAbdullâh ibn Masʻood reported:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: If anyone is ever plagued with grief or anxiety and makes the following supplication, Allah will dispel the grief and anxiety, and replace it with happiness:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ ابْنُ عَبْدِكَ ابْنُ أَمَتِكَ، نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ، مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ، عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَاؤُكَ، أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ، سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ، أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ، أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، أَوِ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ رَبِيعَ قَلْبِي، وَنُورَ صَدْرِي، وَجِلَاءَ حُزْنِي، وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي.»

*Allâhumma inni ‘abduk, ibnu ‘abdik, ibnu amatik; nâṣiyati bi yadik, mâḍin fee ḥukmuk, ‘adlun fiya qaḍâ’uk. As’aluka bi kulli ismin huwa lak, sammayta bihi nafsak, aw ‘allamtahu aḥadan min khalqik, aw anzaltahu fee kitâbik, aw istâ’tharta bihi fee ‘ilmil-ghaybi ‘indak, an taj‘al al-qur’ân al-‘adheema rabee‘a qalbi, wa noora saḍri, wa jilâ’a ḥuzni, wa dhahâba hammi.*

(O Allah! I am Your slave, the son of Your slave, the son of Your maidservant. My forelock is in Your Hand; Your command over me is ever executed; and Your decree over me is just. I ask You by every name belonging to You, which You have named Yourself with, or which You have taught to any of Your creation, or which You have revealed in Your Book, or which You have preserved in the knowledge of the unseen with You. I ask You to make the great Qur’an the life of my heart, the light of my breast, the relief of my sorrow, and the departure of my anxiety.)

Someone asked: O Messenger of Allah! Should we not learn it?

He replied: Yes, indeed. Everyone who hears it should learn it.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, Ibn Ḥibbân, Abu Ya‘lâ, Ibn as-Sunni, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni with an authentic chain of narration)

This deals with the universal decision and the Lord’s decree, which occurs with or without the person’s choice. Both decisions are carried out on the slave, and both these decrees are justice for him. This hadith is based on the verse (cited above), as they have a close relationship.

# Short-term and Long-term Harms of Adoring Someone's Image

We shall conclude our response with a chapter on adoring an image and its immediate and long-term harms. Note they are far too many to be mentioned completely.[281]

This adoration is especially potent at ruining the heart. When the heart is ruined, the intentions, statements, and actions are also ruined. The anchor of monotheism is, therefore, also ruined, as we have previously mentioned, and we will establish further, Allah willing.

Allah (□) has only relayed this disease about two groups: homosexuals and women.

Allah informs us that the wife of al-'Azeez harboured 'ishq (infatuation) for Prophet Yoosuf.[282] She sought to seduce him and plotted to entrap him. Allah also informs us about the rank Yoosuf reached with his patience, chastity, and taqwâ. That was despite his tribulation being so intense that none could withstand it except those to whom Allah grants patience. The likelihood of participating in the act is proportionate to the inviting forces' strength and the absence of impediments.

The inviting force here was extremely strong for multiple reasons:

1. A man's natural attraction to women, ingrained in him by Allah (□), is just as the thirsty is attracted to water and the hungry to food. Many men can patiently keep away from food and drink but cannot stay away from women.

   This tendency is not dispraised within lawful expressions. Rather it is praiseworthy. A hadith in *Kitâb az-Zuhd* by Imam Aḥmad mentions this. Yoosuf ibn 'Aṭiyah aṣ-Ṣaffâr heard from Thâbit al-Bunâni that Anas narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

   «From this world of yours, women and pleasant scents have been made beloved to me. I can patiently keep away from food and drink, but I cannot patiently keep away from them (his wives).»[283]

2. Yoosuf was a young man, and the sexual drive in youth is stronger.

3. He was unmarried. He had no spouse or partner to decrease his flaring sexual drive.

4. He was in a strange land. A stranger finds opportunities to satisfy his desires that he does not find in his land when surrounded by family and acquaintances.

5. The woman possessed status and beauty, each an invitation to be intimate with her.

6. She was not resisting or refusing. Many men lose interest in a woman because of her refusal and resistance. That is due to the humiliation they feel from asking her. However, refusal and resistance increase their love and determination, just as a poet states:

   *It enhanced my zeal to love that was banned,*
   *Humans love most what is outside their hand.*

People's natures vary. With some, their love is enhanced when the woman is inclined, but it dwindles when she refuses and resists. One judge informed me that his sexual drive and interest diminish when his wife or slave resists to the extent that he does not return to them. For others, their love and inclination increase when resisted and their longing intensifies whenever they are prevented. They experience a delight equal to triumphing against a foe that resisted or (equal to) understanding a matter after struggling to comprehend it.

7. She sought, attempted, seduced, and exerted the effort. She relieved him of the burden of seeking and humiliating himself before her. She was the humiliated seeker, and he was the honourable one who was sought.

8. He was in her home, under her authority and power. If he did not comply with her, there was fear of her harming him. The inviting forces of fear and interest were hence synergized.

9. There was no fear of her or anyone in her household disclosing this, for she was chasing him. She had also locked the doors and sent out anyone who might see them.

10. He was her slave in her home, so he could enter, exit, and attend to her without criticism. This setting was comfortable, conducive, and one of the strongest inviting forces.

    (One noble Arab woman was asked what drove her to fornicate. She replied, "The nearness of the pillow and the length of the darkness." She meant the nearness of the man's pillow from her pillow and the long night.)

11. She (later) sought help against him from women who were experts in plotting and trickery. She showed him to them and complained of her dilemma, seeking their aid against him. Yoosuf (□) sought aid from Allah:

﴿ ... وَإِلَّا تَصۡرِفۡ عَنِّي كَيۡدَهُنَّ أَصۡبُ إِلَيۡهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة يوسف: ٣٣)

«…Unless You protect me from their wiles, I may succumb and lapse into folly.» *(Yoosuf 12: 33)*

12. She threatened him with imprisonment and disgrace, which is a type of compulsion since it is a threat that is likely to occur. The inviting force of lust was combined with the inclination to escape the constriction and disgrace of prison.

13. The husband did not display enough manliness to separate them and keep them away from each other. Instead, this was all he managed to say to Yoosuf and the woman:

﴿ يُوسُفُ أَعۡرِضۡ عَنۡ هَٰذَاۚ وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرِي لِذَنۢبِكِۖ إِنَّكِ كُنتِ مِنَ ٱلۡخَٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة يوسف: ٢٩)

«O Yoosuf, say no more about this matter. [O wife] seek pardon for your sin, for you have indeed done wrong.» *(Yoosuf 12: 29)*

The intense protective jealousy of a man is one of the greatest impediments to other men. However, this one did not display any jealousy whatsoever.

Despite all these inviting forces, Yoosuf gave precedence to Allah's pleasure and fear of Him alone. His fear of and love for Allah drove him to choose prison over fornication:

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱلسِّجۡنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدۡعُونَنِيٓ إِلَيۡهِۖ ... ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة يوسف: ٣٣)

«He said: O my Lord, prison is more to my liking than that to which they are calling me…» *(Yoosuf 12: 33)*

He knew that he could not easily avert this from himself. If his Lord did not protect him and thwart their plans, he was afraid he might succumb to his physical desires and behave foolishly. This (realization) was from his self-awareness and full knowledge of his Lord.

This story has over a thousand lessons, benefits, and pearls of wisdom.[284] If Allah permits, perhaps we may list them in a separate treatise.

The second group whose ‘ishq Allah informed us about are the homosexuals:

﴿ وَجَآءَ أَهۡلُ ٱلۡمَدِينَةِ يَسۡتَبۡشِرُونَ ٦٧ قَالَ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ضَيۡفِي فَلَا تَفۡضَحُونِ ٦٨ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُخۡزُونِ ٦٩ قَالُوٓاْ أَوَلَمۡ نَنۡهَكَ عَنِ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٧٠ قَالَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِيٓ إِن كُنتُمۡ فَٰعِلِينَ ٧١ لَعَمۡرُكَ إِنَّهُمۡ لَفِي سَكۡرَتِهِمۡ يَعۡمَهُونَ ٧٢ ﴾ (سورة الحِجر: ٦٧-٧٢)

﴿The people of the city came, exulting at the news [of the arrival of those young men]. Looṭ said: These are my guests, so do not put me to shame. Fear Allah, and do not disgrace me. They said: Did we not forbid you to offer hospitality to anyone? Looṭ said: Here are my daughters [to marry], if you must. By your life [O Muhammad], they were wandering blindly in their lustful frenzy.﴾ *(al-Ḥijr 15: 67-72)*

This nation also harboured excessive love. Allah (□) has relayed this about these two groups, each lusting after the forbidden and not caring what harm this adoration contained.

Finding the medicine for this disease has stumped the doctors, and attaining its cure is beyond their reach. By Allah, it is a terminal illness and a fatal poison. It is too difficult to rescue from its hooks any heart that it snares. When its fire ignites within a soul, it becomes difficult for any creature to save itself from its flames.

It has several types:

At times, it is disbelief, like those who make the object of their adoration an equal to Allah, loving it as they love Him. What if their hearts love it more than they love Allah? The one harbouring this type of adoration is not forgiven. It is one of the greatest forms of polytheism, and Allah does not forgive those who love others as well as Him. He only forgives, through cleansing repentance, something less serious than that.

A sign of this disbelief is that these lovers adore others more than they adore Him. They give precedence to their beloved's pleasure over their Lord's pleasure. When their beloved's rights conflict with the Lord's right to obedience, they prefer their beloved's rights and pleasure over Allah's rights and pleasure. They spend their most valuable possessions for their beloved and spend for their Lord, if they spend at all, the worst of their possessions. They exhaust their time and effort in pleasing, obeying, and drawing close to their beloved. To their Lord, they allot, if they obey Him at all, any remaining hours they have.

Most people who adore such images are exactly like this. Place their condition in one hand and their monotheism and faith in the other, and measure the difference fairly by the standards of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

Some lovers may admit they prefer to adore their lover rather than love and worship their Lord. A vile lover states:[285]

*I sip with my mouth sips that are, indeed,*
*Much sweeter tasting than tawḥeed.*

Similarly, other villains admit that being with their love is more desirable than the Lord's mercy. We seek refuge with you, O Allah, from such desertion.

One of them states:

*In my heart, being with you is loved even more,*
*Than even the mercy of the majestic Creator.*

This type of adoration is one of the greatest forms of polytheism. Many lovers admit that they only have room in their hearts for their beloved. Their beloved has conquered their entire heart, and they have become completely enslaved to their beloved in every respect.

Instead of being enslaved to the Mighty and Majestic Creator, they have accepted enslavement to a creature like them. Enslavement is complete love and humility; such people have exhausted their love and humility to pursue their beloved, becoming truly enslaved.

We cannot compare the harm of this grave matter with the harm of fornication, for that is a major sin, and the fornicator is subjected to its rulings. The harm of this adoration is the harm of polytheism.

An insightful scholar states:

> I prefer to be plagued with [committing] indecency with that image than its adoration, which enslaves my heart and distracts it from Allah.

The cure for this fatal disease is understanding that this affliction – which conflicts with the devotion that Allah deserves – is due to ignorance and the heart being heedless of Allah.

First, it is essential to know the ways and signs of the Lord and to understand that only He deserves to be worshipped and adored. Then one must practise the internal and external forms of worship to distract the heart from constantly thinking about the object of adoration. One must persistently appeal to Allah (ﷻ) to avert this and return one's heart and devotion to Him. The most beneficial medicine is sincerity to Allah:

﴿ ... كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصۡرِفَ عَنۡهُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَٱلۡفَحۡشَآءَۚ إِنَّهُۥ مِنۡ عِبَادِنَا ٱلۡمُخۡلَصِينَ ٢٤ ﴾ (سورة يوسف: ٢٤)

﴿…Thus We averted from him evil and shameful deeds. Verily, he was one of Our chosen slaves.﴾ *(Yoosuf 12: 24)*

Allah informs us that Yoosuf averted his master's wife's evil adoration of him and the immorality of the act through his sincerity. When the heart becomes sincere and acts purely for Allah, the adoration of these images does not overcome it since it only overcomes a vacant heart.

*Desiring her came to me before I knew desire,*
*So it met a vacant heart and became fixed there.*

Intelligent people should know that Sharia and a sound mind call towards attaining and maximizing benefit and removing and minimizing harm. When a sensible individual sees that a matter contains both benefit and harm, two things become incumbent upon them – one factual and another practical. The factual is to identify whether the benefit is greater than the harm. Once this becomes clear, it is essential to prefer the more beneficial of the two.

It is known that adoring someone's image results in neither worldly nor religious benefits. Its religious and worldly harm is many times greater than any benefit. There are many reasons for this:

1. The person becomes preoccupied with loving and remembering something created instead of loving and remembering the Lord. These do not coexist in a heart without one conquering the other and ultimately taking precedence.

2. The heart is tortured with the beloved, for whoever loves anything but Allah is unavoidably tormented by it:

    *No one on earth is more miserable than lovers,*
    *Even if they consider their desires a taste most sweet.*
    *You find them crying each and every moment,*
    *From the fear of separation or from longing to meet.*
    *When afar, they cry out of longing for them;*
    *When close, they cry, worried about farewell.*
    *Their eyes become warm at departure;*
    *At arrival, their eyes become warm as well.*

Even if a person considers this adoration pleasant, it is one of the greatest tortures for the heart.

3. The heart of the victim of this adoration is a captive in the beloved's grip. It inflicts humiliation upon the victim, yet the person does not notice the injuries due to their intoxication. The heart is:

> *Like a bird being shackled in a child's grip,*
> *He endangers its life while he runs and plays.*

A poet states:

> *You stole my heart, though you ignored and abused,*
> *Meanwhile you were careless, distracted, and amused.*

The life of those who love excessively is that of the bound captive, whereas the life of the untroubled is that of the liberated:

> *Unbound with their gaze, yet they are captive,*
> *They lie sick on their beds, awaiting destruction.*
> *Dead people are they, yet seen as living tall,*
> *Though they will not stand until resurrection.*
> *In the abyss of drunkenness, their hearts were lost,*
> *Thus before death, their hearts will not function.*

4. It distracts the person from religious and worldly well-being; nothing is more detrimental to these than adoring someone's image. Religious welfare is centred upon taking control of the heart and devoting it to Allah. Excessive adoration is its greatest distracter and inhibitor. Worldly well-being is a by-product of religious well-being. Those who lose control of their religious affairs and neglect them will find their worldly affairs in even more loss and ruin.

5. The harms of this world and the hereafter accelerate in the direction of those adoring images faster than fire races through dry firewood. That is because whenever the heart draws closer to this forbidden adoration

and strengthens its relationship with it, it becomes distant from Allah. The most distant hearts from Allah are the hearts that adore images, and the heart is overtaken with harm once it distances itself from Allah. Satan surrounds such a person from every angle. Whoever is surrounded and overwhelmed by the enemy is victimized, and the enemy inflicts all possible harm. What do you expect when a heart is overwhelmed by its enemy, the creature keenest to misguide and corrupt it? What do you expect of a person who has been distanced from the Guardian – the One without Whom no happiness, success or joy can be attained?

6. When this adoration becomes fixed in the heart and takes over an individual, it ruins the mind and increases its satanic whispers. It may even drive the victim insane, and a ruined mind can reap no benefit. The stories about lovers affected by this are available wherever they lived; some have been witnessed directly. The noblest faculty of the human being is the mind, which distinguishes humans from animals. Once one loses their mind, they become rightly classified as an animal. Perhaps the animal itself is better off than a human in this condition. This extreme adoration did away with the mind of Majnoon Laylâ and others like him.[286] His insanity may be greater than the insanity of others, as it was said:

> *They said: You have gone mad with your love,*
> *You told them: Love is fiercer than insanity.*
> *'Ishq does not allow its victim ever to revive,*
> *Whereas the insane undergo seizures temporarily.*

7. It may totally or partially spoil the senses, either spiritually or physically. Spiritual corruption is a consequence of the heart's corruption, for when the heart is corrupted, so are the eyes, ears, and tongue. As such, one sees as beautiful the ugliness that comes from oneself and one's beloved. The following hadith narrated by Abu ad-Dardâ' alludes to this:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Your love for a thing causes blindness and deafness.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, and al-Quḍâʻi; graded weak by al-Albâni)

It blinds the eye of the heart from seeing the faults and flaws of the beloved until the eyes cannot see it and the ears become deafened to it. In addition, inclinations conceal flaws; the eyes of someone inclined to something do not see its flaws. Only when the inclination vanishes does one observe them. Intense inclinations are a veil upon the eyes preventing one from seeing a matter as it is:

> *I desired you when a veil on my eyes overcame,*
> *Upon its removal, I tore myself apart with blame.*

Someone within something cannot see its flaws, and someone outside who has not yet entered can also not see the flaws. Flaws can be seen only by someone who has both experienced something and stepped away from it.[287] For this reason, the Companions who entered Islam after disbelief were better than those born into it.

ʻUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (□) states:

> The handholds of Islam will be undone, one knot and then another, when born into Islam are those who did not know the period of ignorance.

When the physical senses become spoiled, the body becomes ill and deteriorates. It may even lead to the person's demise, just as is known from the stories of those killed by excessive adoration:

> A young man was once brought before Ibn ʻAbbâs on the Day of ʻArafah. He had become so thin that he looked just like skin and bones.
>
> Ibn ʻAbbâs asked: What is the matter with him?
>
> They replied: He suffers from ʻishq.

After this, Ibn ‘Abbâs continued seeking refuge in Allah from ‘ishq for the entire day.

8. ‘Ishq is excessive love, as previously mentioned. The object of adoration conquers the lover’s heart and is never absent from imagination, attention, and thoughts. The person never stops thinking of the beloved, which busies the soul and hinders it from using its human physical strength. Once this strength is suspended, it harms the body and soul in a way that is almost impossible to remedy. In turn, the actions, qualities, and motives change, making it difficult to rescue the person from this.

*Love first begins with a pressing tenacity,*
*That overtakes him and by fate, he is driven.*
*Then when the lad rides the seas of desire,*
*Enormities arise beyond every strength given.*

The beginning of ‘ishq is sweet and easy. Its middle phase is anxiety, disease, and preoccupation of the heart. If Allah’s care does not rescue one, its end is injury and death.

*Live untroubled – for as a burden love begins,*
*Then illness comes, then ultimately it kills.*

Another poet states:

*He was captivated with ‘ishq until he adored,*
*When it isolated him, and he could not abstain.*
*He saw an ocean he assumed was a wave,*
*And when he engaged it, he drowned there in vain.*

The sin was his; he was the criminal against himself; and he had fallen prey to the famous saying, “Your hands tied, and your mouth blew.”[288]

‘Ishq has stages – early, moderate, and advanced. Throughout the beginning phase, one should offer utmost resistance, especially if reaching

the beloved is impeded by fate or legislation. If this fails, and the heart insists on seeking the beloved – and these are the intermediate and advanced phases – then one must conceal this and not disclose it to anyone. One must not dishonour themselves by showing others this infatuation with the beloved. This would be combining both polytheism and oppression, and this oppression is one of the worst.

It may even be more harmful to the beloved and one's family than being oppressed through one's wealth. This adoration would subject the beloved to shame and harassment. People would be divided into believers and deniers, as most people believe rumours regarding these matters at first suspicion. When people hear "So-and-So did this with So-and-So, or with So-and-So," the story is denied by one and is believed by nine hundred and ninety-nine.

In people's eyes, the statement of the enraptured lover is accepted as the positive truth. Even when an adored person falsely informs people about another person's shameless interactions with them, they immediately feel certain of its truth. If the two inadvertently happened to be in the same place, people feel certain that this was coordinated and mutually agreed upon between them. People's premature surety about these accounts, based on suspicions, imagined substantiations, and unfounded details, is equivalent to their surety about the tangible and observable realities (of life).

This suspicion incited people to slander the pure, purified, beloved wife of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) whose innocence was asserted from the seven skies.[289] This was merely because Ṣafwân ibn al-Mu'aṭṭal came with her by himself behind the army. As a result, those destined to be destroyed were destroyed. Had Allah Himself not defended her innocence and belied her slanderer, the outcome would have been completely different.[290]

The point is that if the victims of 'ishq for someone unattainable express their feelings, they incur great injustice against themselves and their families. Many people believe their suspicions. Suppose the infatuated

person seeks help from someone who can persuade the beloved to respond, whether by arousing their interest or frightening them. The oppression escalates and expands in that case, and the mediator becomes an oppressive procurer.

The Prophet (ﷺ) cursed the intermediary who facilitated a bribe between its payer and receiver.[291] What do you expect for the procurer? This mediator approaches the beloved on behalf of a lover seeking an unlawful relationship. The collaboration of the lover and procurer oppresses the beloved and others since the aim cannot be accomplished without oppressing their lives, wealth, or honour. The objective is often contingent upon killing a soul whose life impedes these aims.

Indeed, how many murder victims have had their blood spilt for this reason, be they a spouse, a master, or a relative? How many women have been provoked against their husbands and slaves against their masters? Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) cursed whoever did such things and declared the victim innocent of it. (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, Ibn Ḥibbân, and al-Ḥâkim with an authentic chain) This is one of the greatest major sins.

The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade a man from becoming engaged to a woman who was engaged to his brother and from selling an item his brother had sold. (Muslim) How about someone striving to create separation between a man and his wife or slave girl so that he may attain her?

Those who adore someone's image, and the procurers who aid them, do not see their actions as a sin. In reality, though, this lover's attempts to reach his beloved and contend with the husband and master involve the sin of oppressing another. This may be no less than the sin of fornication if it does not surpass it.

In addition, the right of this other person is not dismissed with repentance. Even though repentance dismisses Allah's right, the rights of the oppressed remain, and the victim can demand compensation on the Day of Resurrection. Oppressing the parents by corrupting their child, a part of

them and dearer to them than themselves, is greater than taking all their wealth. Likewise is oppressing the husband by corrupting his beloved and violating her. For this reason, this harm is worse than when wealth is taken, and nothing rectifies it in the victim's eyes except bloodshed.

What an awful form of oppression! It is greater in sin than fornication itself. If this right belonged to someone fighting for Allah's cause, the criminal would be made to stand before him on the Day of Resurrection. The wronged husband will be told, "Take from the oppressor's good deeds whatever you wish."

It was reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«The sanctity of the wives of those who travel to fight in Allah's path is like the sanctity of their mothers for those who sit at home (that is, do not go out for jihad). Anyone who stays behind looking after the family of a mujâhid and betrays his trust will be made to stand on the Day of Judgement before the mujâhid, who will take away from his meritorious deeds whatever he likes. So what do you think?» (Muslim)

In other words, what do you expect of his good deeds to remain? Suppose the oppressed happens to be a neighbour or relative. In that case, the oppression augments and becomes compound oppression since it involves severing the ties of kin and/or harming the neighbour. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«One who severs ties of kinship will not enter paradise.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

– and neither will:

«…someone whose neighbour is not secure from his harm.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

If the lover seeks aid with the devils among the jinn to reach the beloved, either using sorcery or the equivalent, then the disbelief of sorcery

is added to polytheism and oppression. Even if the lover does not perform it yet approves of it, they have willingly accepted disbelief to achieve their aim, and that is not far from the rejection (of Islam).

The point is that collaborating in this regard is collaboration in sin and enmity. The widespread oppression and extended harm from the lover achieving their aim are obvious. If the lover eventually reaches the beloved, this beloved will make more demands, which the lover feels compelled to fulfil. Ultimately, each of them aids the other in oppression and enmity. The beloved helps the lover oppress those associated with him (or her), such as one's family, relatives, master, or spouse. The lover helps the beloved oppress whoever stands in the beloved's way. Each has helped the other to oppress people, leading to enmity and hatred resulting from the collaboration of their corrupted souls.

This is customary between two lovers; one helps the other in matters that entail injustice, enmity, and transgression. Perhaps one may strive to acquire for the other an unsuitable position, acquire wealth unlawfully, or put the other on a pedestal.

Suppose the beloved quarrels or debates with another person. In that case, the lover adamantly sides with the former, regardless of who is right. That, together with various other injustices, is like conning someone into giving money or attaining wealth for the beloved via stealing, usurping, treachery, false oaths, highway robbery, and so on. This could even kill a soul which Allah has forbidden if the lover is determined to take the wealth and give it to the beloved.

All these harms and countless others stem from the adoration of someone's image. It can even drive the victims to outright disbelief. Many who grew up as Muslims have become Christians because of this 'ishq.

A caller of the adhân noticed a beautiful woman on a rooftop. Mesmerized by her, he descended, entered her house, and requested an immoral relationship. She responded that she was Christian and would

marry him if he entered her religion. He agreed but fell to his death when climbing their staircase later that day. ‘Abdul-Ḥaqq al-Ishbeeli mentioned this incident.[292]

When Christians wanted to convert a male captive, they would present him with a beautiful woman and command her to evoke his interest in her. Once his heart became infatuated with her, she would offer herself to him if he entered her religion. At that moment, only:

﴿ يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱلۡقَوۡلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَفِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۖ وَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَۚ وَيَفۡعَلُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ ٢٧ ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٢٧)

﴿Allah will make steadfast those who believe, with the word that stands firm, in the life of this world and in the hereafter. But Allah leaves the wrongdoers to go astray; Allah does whatever He wills.﴾ *(Ibrâheem 14: 27)*

‘Ishq involves the lover and beloved oppressing one another by aiding each other in immorality and oppression of their selves. Each of them has oppressed their partner in addition to their oppression extending to others, as just mentioned. Greater than all this is their oppression through polytheism. ‘Ishq entails every form of oppression.

The beloved who does not fear Allah oppresses by subjecting the lover to ruin. The beloved evokes the partner’s hopes by wearing beautiful clothes and every other method that can be employed to extract the beloved’s wealth and benefit. Yet, the beloved does not give in to the lover, meaning unrequited longing or lust remains. This subjects the lover to severe torment, which may eventually lead to killing the beloved for revenge, especially if they become inclined toward someone else.

How many murders has this ‘ishq caused on both sides? How many blessings has it removed? How many rich has it bankrupted? How many ranks has it squandered? How many unions has it broken up? How much corruption has it bred in a person’s spouse and child? When the wife sees

the husband loving someone else, she too may take a lover. As a result, the man dithers between ruining his home through divorce or becoming a cuckold! Some people prefer the former, while others prefer the latter.

The intelligent should not allow the adoration of an image to dominate them as it may lead to most or some of these harms. Those who do so have squandered and deceived themselves and are the ones who destroyed themselves were they to become destroyed.

Were it not for repeatedly glancing at the face of the beloved and hoping to reach them, this infatuation would not have overwhelmed their hearts. Infatuation begins with admiration, which originates from either seeing or hearing. It is not triggered if it is not coupled with hopes of reaching (the beloved) and is met with despair. If it is coupled with hope but dismissed from the mind without the heart becoming preoccupied with it, it does not happen. A person may persistently think about the beloved's beauty but may also couple this with the fear of what is greater than the delight of attaining them. This could be the fear of entering the hellfire, incurring the anger of *al-Jabbâr* (the Compeller), and accumulating sins. If this fear outweighs the initial hopes and thoughts, the attraction does not materialize.

Even if the person does not have this fear, there may be worldly fears, like the loss of life, wealth, reputation, and respect of those who are important to a person. If these fears outweigh what generates this infatuation, they will repel it. If the person fears squandering something dearer and more beneficial than their object of infatuation and gives precedence to the former over the latter, the 'ishq is effectively suppressed.

If none of this exists, or the beloved's love outweighs it all, the heart and the inner self are drawn towards the beloved.

Some may point out,[293] "You have mentioned the harms and dangers of 'ishq, but why have you not mentioned its benefits?[294] These include being soft-hearted, amusing the carnal self, tempering its anxieties,

exercising it, and disciplining it to develop noble qualities like courage, generosity, chivalry, kind-heartedness, and leniency.

Some allege that ‘ishq is the disease of the nobles’ hearts.

Some claim that ‘ishq only suits those with apparent chivalry and pure character, virtuous tongues and sheer philanthropy, or brilliant morals and noble ancestry.

Others maintain that ‘ishq emboldens the coward’s heart, sharpens the idiot’s mind, releases the stingy person’s hand, humbles the rulers’ pride, and tames repulsive character traits. It is the company of those without company and the friend of those without friends.

Others hold that ‘ishq removes the burdens, lightens the spirit, filters the heart’s distress, and enables one to find comfort in the acts of the nobles:

*The one protective of you dies in this world,*
*And love itself provoked being suddenly slain.*
*Through his nobility, he buries every secret,*
*And when asked, ignorance of you he feigns.*
*He wishes to spend the night sick – so perhaps,*
*She will message him if he complains.*
*He maintains integrity, aspiring for heights,*
*So Laylâ one day praises the merit he sustains.*

Thus, they say that ‘ishq encourages noble character. One wise person pointed out that ‘ishq challenges the carnal self and tames one’s character; displaying it is natural, and concealing it is a difficult task.

Another person stated that the one whose carnal self is not overjoyed by a pleasant sound and a charming face needs treatment for a corrupt temperament:

*If you are oblivious to ‘ishq and devoid of desire,*
*Then no share of the goodly life will you acquire.*

Others maintain:

*If you are oblivious to ‘ishq and affection,*
*You and the lost caravan are equal in direction.*
*If you are oblivious to ‘ishq and do not adore,*
*Then a rock among rocks you are, nothing more.*
*If you are oblivious to ‘ishq and devoid of desire,*
*Then stand and eat hay, for you are a donkey.*

One of the chaste, reserved lovers mentioned, “Become chaste, be noble, harbour ‘ishq, and be charming.”

A lover was asked: What would you do if you attained the one whom you love?

He replied: I will delight my sights with his face and comfort my heart with his words and statements. I will conceal from him anything he would not like to be revealed. I will not perform any heinous act that might lead to his absence.

He then recited:

*I am alone with him, so I reserve myself nobly,*
*Fearing the accusation of not really loving him.*
*Like water in the hands of a fasting person,*
*He accepts the thirst and withholds his whim.*

Is-ḥâq ibn Ibrâheem explains:

The souls of those with ‘ishq are pleasant and light, while their bodies are nimble and soft. Their pastime offers warmth; their words enliven those with dead hearts and sharpen their minds. Were it not for them, the delights of this world would not exist.

Another said that ‘ishq for the soul is like nourishment for the body; not taking it harms you, and taking too much of it kills you.

*My dearest, love contains exquisite delight,*
*Yet brings constant distress, misery, and hell.*
*For that reason, no life is pleasant without it,*
*Life is unpleasant until ringing its bell.*
*There is no good in the world without loving,*
*Nor any enjoyment without the beloved as well.*

Al-Kharâ’iṭi quotes from Abu Ghassân:

Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq passed by a young girl who was saying:

*I loved him before my talismans were removed,*
*Swaying like the smooth stalk, he moves.*

He asked her: Are you a free woman or a slave?

She replied: I am enslaved.

He asked: To your love?

She hesitated, so he made her swear to tell him, and she recited:

*I am one whose heart was spun by her whim,*
*The one killed by loving Muhammad ibn al-Qâsim.*

He bought her from her master and sent her to Muhammad ibn al-Qâsim ibn Ja‘far ibn Abi Ṭâlib, and exclaimed: These are the tribulations of men. By Allah, how many nobles have died and how many healthy have been sickened from them.[295]

Here is another similar incident:

A young [slave] girl came to ‘Uthmân ibn ‘Affân, complaining about a man from the Anṣâr.

‘Uthmân asked her: What is your story?

She replied: O Leader of the Faithful, I have fallen in love with his brother's son and cannot bear to be away from him.

'Uthmân told the man: Either you grant her to your brother's son, or I give you her price from my own money.

He responded: O Leader of the Faithful, I make you witness that she is his.

We do not deny that when 'ishq involves fornicating with the beloved, this is an awful thing. We are only talking about the chaste 'ishq that is experienced by upright folks whose religiosity, chastity, and chivalry refuse to ruin via unlawful conduct what is between them and Allah, or what is between them and their beloved.

This is like the 'ishq of the noble predecessors and the great imams. It was reported that 'Ubaydullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Utbah ibn Mas'ood, one of the seven jurists of Madinah, fell in love, and his condition became common knowledge. Yet he was not criticized, and those who blamed him were considered unjust.

Some of his poetry is as follows:

*You concealed your love until concealing harmed you;*
*People blamed you, and their blame was unjust.*
*Those with grudges announced it, and even before this,*
*Your love insisted that disclosing it is a must.*
*You became like the Indian who died of sorrow*
*In search of India, or whose illness was robust.*
*Do you consider pursuing your love a flaw?*
*Alas, ignoring your beloved is what entails disgust.*
*Fine, go and ignore her, which is piety, you claim;*
*Perhaps your claim you need to adjust.*

Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Dâwood adh-Dhâhiri[296] was a scholar renowned for the various sciences. These included fiqh, Hadith, tafseer, and

language. His juristic views were respected, and he was one of the great scholars, yet his ‘ishq is famous.

Nifṭawayh relates:

I went to see him during the sickness that he died from, and I asked: How are you?

He replied: Being in love with that person – whom you know I am in love with – is what did this to me.

I asked: What prevented you from enjoying it when it was accessible?

He replied: There are two forms of enjoying. The first is a lawful glance, and the other is unlawful indulgence. The lawful glance caused what you are seeing. What kept me from unlawful indulgence was what my father told me. He mentioned that Suwayd ibn Sa‘eed reported from ‘Ali ibn Mus-hir that Abu Yaḥyâ al-Qattât heard from Mujâhid that ‘Ibn ‘Abbâs narrated that the Prophet [ﷺ] said: Allah forgives and admits into paradise whoever has ‘ishq, but conceals it, remains chaste, and has patience.

Then he recited:

*Look at the magic that flickers in his glance,*
*Look at the blackness in his tranquil eyes.*
*Look at the hairs that sit on his cheeks,*
*As if they were ants walking upon ivories.*[297]

He also recited:

*What is with them – that they dismiss the blackness,*
*Upon his cheeks, but do not dismiss branched roses.*
*If the flaw of his cheeks were its dark hairs,*
*Then the flaw of his eyes is the hairs of the lashes.*

I asked him: You reject analogy in fiqh but allow it in poetry?

He replied: I was incited by the strength of my emotions and the grip of my carnal self.

He died later that night.

He had authored the book *az-Zahrah* because of his beloved.[298]

Here is an excerpt from it:

Those who despair of attaining their beloved and do not die immediately are obsessed with it. This is because the initial shock of despair hits the heart when it is unprepared for it. The second shock then comes to the heart after the first has paved the way.[299]

‘Abdullâh ibn Ma‘mar al-Qaysi relates:

After I performed Hajj one year, I went one night to the mosque in Madinah to visit the grave of Allah’s Messenger [ﷺ]. As I sat through the night between the grave and the pulpit, I heard sobbing that drew my attention. Someone was moaning: I weep over you as the pigeons cry, and my racing thoughts have made sleep impossible. The night has been lengthened and lit ablaze, and I am helpless against the coal-like scorch of being in love. The full moon testifies to my distress and adoration of the one resembling that full moon. I never thought I would fall for her until I buckled before this tribulation.[300]

Then the voice fell silent, and I could not tell where it came from.

Suddenly, he began weeping and sobbing again. Then he moaned: I lament over thoughts of your distance as this black night obscures sights. I call out for you into that night, but the darkness is like an ocean with deafening waves. Meanwhile, the moon sits elegantly like a king in the sky, with the stars around it as its soldiers.

O night, you are prolonged for the lover who has nothing to help him find his love except the daylight.

It told me: Go ahead and kill yourself, and know that love is the essence of disgrace.

I started heading towards him when he first began his lament, and he did not realize this until I was right before him. I found a young lad whose cheeks had two scars from the trail of tears.

I greeted him, and he told me: Sit down. Who are you?

I replied: ‘Abdullâh ibn Ma‘mar al-Qaysi.

He asked: Do you want something?

I replied: Yes. I was sitting in ar-Rawḍah and nothing disturbed me but your voice. What on earth is the matter with you?

He replied: I am ‘Utbah ibn al-Ḥubâb ibn al-Mundhir ibn al-Jamooḥ al-Anṣâri. One day, I set out to al-Masjid al-Aḥzâb to pray there. I stopped nearby and suddenly a group of women approached. Among them was a young girl of extraordinary beauty. She was gorgeous. She stopped in front of me and said: O ‘Utbah, how about having a relationship with someone seeking to have a relationship with you?

She departed, and I did not hear from her after that, nor could I find any trace of her. I am lost, moving from one place to another.

He then screamed and fainted. Later, he regained his senses, with his cheeks appearing to have been dyed red. He recited:

*I watch you with my heart from distant lands,*
*Do you see me with your heart from afar?*
*My heart and eyes continue to grieve over you.*
*You have my soul, and your memory is with me.*
*I cannot enjoy life until first I can see you,*
*Even if I were in al-firdaws*[301] *or the Garden of Eden.*

I warned him: My nephew! Repent to your Lord and seek forgiveness for your sin, for the terror of resurrection awaits you!

He replied: I will never be consoled until the leather merchants return.[302]

I remained with him until morning and then I suggested: Come with us to al-Masjid al-Aḥzâb and perhaps Allah may relieve your distress.

He replied: I hope so, with Allah's permission, due to the blessing of your presence.

We reached al-Masjid al-Aḥzâb, and I heard him recite more poetry. We then sat until we prayed *dhuhr* [the obligatory early afternoon prayer]. Suddenly the women approached, but the girl was not with them.

They stopped before him and enquired: O 'Utbah, how do you feel about the one who requested a relationship with you and made you lose your mind?

He asked: What happened to her?

They replied: Her father took her and travelled to the lands of Samâwah.

I asked them about this girl and they replied: She is Rayyâ, the daughter of al-Ghiṭreef as-Sulami.[303]

'Utbah raised his head towards them and recited:

*My beloved Rayyâ has now surfaced anew.*
*To the lands of Samâwah her caravan has tread.*
*My love, I have become blind from weeping,*
*Can another lend me an eyeball from his head?*

I told him: I have accrued wealth that I intended to spend on people seeking chastity [via marriage], and by Allah, I will spend it on you

until you acquire what pleases you and more. Come, let us head to the mosque of the Anṣâr.

We journeyed until we reached a group of them. We greeted them, and they responded gracefully. I asked them: What do you know about ‘Utbah and his father?

They replied: He is one of the Arab chiefs.

I told them: Well, he has fallen madly in love, and all I need from you is some help to reach Samâwah.

They responded: We hear, and we obey.

We rode together until we saw the houses of Banu Sulaym.

The news was given to al-Ghiṭreef about us, so he rushed out, met us, and greeted us: Welcome, noble people.

We replied: May Allah be gracious to you. We are your guests.

He informed us: You have arrived at the residence of the most generous host.

He called out: My servants! Host these people.

The cushions and carpets were quickly laid out, and the meats were slaughtered.

We told him: We will not taste your food until you give us what we need.

He asked: What do you need?

We replied: ‘Utbah ibn al-Ḥubâb ibn al-Mundhir wishes to engage for marriage your noble daughter.

He told us: The decision lies with the one to whom you propose. I will go and inform her.

He entered, enraged at his daughter.

She enquired: Father! Why do I notice anger on your face?

He replied: The Anṣâr have come to request from me your hand in marriage.

She replied: They are noble chiefs, for whom the Prophet [ﷺ] sought forgiveness. To whom are they seeking me to be given in marriage?

He replied: To ‘Utbah ibn al-Ḥubâb.

She replied: By Allah, I have heard that this ‘Utbah is true to his word and reliable.

He declared: I swear to never marry you to him. I have been told of your exchanges with him!

She replied: This never happened, but since you swore, the Anṣâr should not be rejected harshly, so refuse them politely.

He asked: How?

She replied: Ask for an outrageous dowry. This will make them retract their proposal.

He remarked: That is a brilliant idea.

He rushed out and told them: The noble lady has accepted, but I want a dowry worthy of her. Who can provide it?

‘Abdullâh ibn Ma‘mar replied: I can. Ask as much as you want.

He told them: A thousand *mithqâl* of gold, a hundred cloaks, and five pouches of amber.[304]

‘Abdullâh replied: All of that is yours. Have you agreed?

He answered: Yes.

I sent a party of the Anṣâr to Madinah, and they brought everything he demanded. The wedding banquet was prepared, and the festivity continued for days.

Then the father told them: Take your lady and go.

He placed her upon a howdah and packed her with thirty camel-loads of luggage and souvenirs.[305] We bade him farewell and departed.

When a day's journey remained between Madinah and us, we were attacked by a group of horses that I presume were from Sulaym. 'Utbah charged in combat against them. He killed several of their men and injured others, then returned with a gash that flowed with blood. 'Utbah fell to the ground upon his cheek, the horses took off, and he passed away.

We yelled: O 'Utbah!

The girl heard us and threw herself from the top of the camel, screaming with anguish, and recited:

*I forced patience, though I could not bear patience;*
*I hoped for the remedy of reuniting with you.*
*If my soul were just, it would die in front of you,*
*For no creature would outrace it to meeting you.*
*There is no one after me and you who is fairer,*
*To his beloved, nor has a soul to a soul been so true.*

She then gasped deeply and passed away. We dug them a single grave and buried them both in it. I returned to Madinah and lived there for seven years.

I later went to Hejaz. When I returned to Madinah, I decided: By Allah, I will pay a visit to the grave of 'Utbah.

I went to the grave and found a tree with red and yellow branches over it, so I asked the residents of that land: What is this tree called?

They told me: The tree of the newlyweds!

It is said that ‘ishq was granted a concession and treated with leniency in the hadith of Suwayd ibn Sa‘eed. He got it from ‘Ali ibn Mus-hir who heard that Abu Yaḥyâ al-Qattât reported from Mujâhid. He said that Ibn ‘Abbâs narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Whoever has ‘ishq but remains chaste and conceals it until death is a martyr.”[306]

There is also a marfoo‘ report that Suwayd got from Mus-hir, who heard Hishâm ibn ‘Urwah say that his father heard it from ‘Â’ishah.

There is another report from al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi. He reported from az-Zuhri that al-Mu‘âfâ ibn Zakariyâ heard that Quṭbah ibn Abil-Faḍl heard from Aḥmad that Masrooq narrated it from the Prophet (ﷺ).

There is also another report from az-Zubayr ibn Bakkâr. He reported from ‘Abdul-‘Azeez al-Mâjishoon that ‘Abdul-‘Azeez ibn Abi Ḥâzim heard from Ibn Abi Nujayḥ that Mujâhid narrated it from Ibn ‘Abbâs. The report said Allah’s Messenger looked at Zaynab bint Jaḥsh (□) and said, “Glorified is the Turner of the Hearts.”[307]

She was married to Zayd ibn Ḥârithah, his servant, and when he decided to divorce her, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to him:

«Fear Allah and keep your wife.» (Bukhari)

When he eventually divorced her, Allah (□) married her to His Messenger (ﷺ) from above the seven heavens. Allah was her guardian Who gave her in marriage to His Messenger (ﷺ), legitimized her marriage from above His Throne, and revealed to His Messenger (ﷺ):

﴿ وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِيٓ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا ٱللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى ٱلنَّاسَ وَٱللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَن تَخْشَىٰهُ ... ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾

(سورة الأحزاب: ٣٧)

﴿And [remember] when you [O Muhammad] said to him on whom Allah had conferred favour [of faith] and you [too] had conferred favour [of manumission]: Keep your wife and fear Allah. You concealed in your heart that which Allah was going to disclose. You feared [the criticism of] the people but it was more fitting that you should fear Allah…﴾ *(al-Aḥzâb 33: 37)*

Az-Zuhri mentions that the first love story in Islam was the love of the Prophet (ﷺ) for ‘Â’ishah (□).[308] Masrooq used to refer to her as the beloved of Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ).[309]

The response[310] – and from Allah is all success – is that any discussion of this subject first requires distinguishing between the unlawful and permissible and beneficial and harmful. The verdict to either dispraise/denounce or praise/accept cannot simply be declared in absolute terms. Its ruling and reality are only clarified when mentioning the related circumstances.

In short, ‘ishq itself is neither praiseworthy nor ugly. We will now discuss the difference between beneficial and harmful love and between permissible and forbidden love.

The most beneficial, superior, and obligatory love is for the One Whom the hearts were disposed to love and the creatures were created to adore. The earth and heavens were erected through this, and the creatures were created for it. It is the secret behind the testimony of *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh* – for the *ilâh* (deity; the object of worship or devotion) is the One Whom the hearts deify through love, exaltation, glorification, surrender, and worship.

Worship can only be for Him alone, which requires the utmost love and humility. Worshipping others is the greatest injustice which Allah does not forgive. Only Allah (□) is loved for every aspect of His, while everything else is loved as a consequence of loving Him.

All His revealed Books establish the obligation of loving Him, and it is the call of all His Messengers. It is the fiṭrah upon which He has disposed His slaves. The minds He has installed within them and the blessings He has poured upon them necessitate it. Our hearts are disposed and akin to loving whoever is kind and gracious to them.[311] How about loving the One, the source of every kindness, the only One from the entire creation Who gives every single favour:

﴿ وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ ٱلضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْـَٔرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٥٣)

﴿Whatever blessing you have, it is from Allah, then when misfortune afflicts you, it is to Him that you cry out for help.﴾ *(an-Naḥl 16: 53)*

He has informed His slaves about Himself through His beautiful names, lofty attributes, and designs that indicate His perfection, brilliance, majesty, and greatness. All this incites us to love Him exclusively.

Love has two stimulants: beauty and awe, and the Lord is perfect in both. He is beautiful and loves beauty. (Muslim and Aḥmad) All beauty and awe are from Him. Hence, none deserves to be loved inherently except Him:

﴿ قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ... ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ٣١)

﴿Say: If you love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you…﴾ *(Âl ʿImrân 3: 31)*

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِى ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ يُجَـٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَآئِمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾ إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ

ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤۡتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُمۡ رَٰكِعُونَ ٥٥ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ فَإِنَّ حِزۡبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ ٥٦ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥٤-٥٦)

﴿O you who believe, whoever among you renounces his faith, Allah will bring forth [in their stead] people whom He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers and stern towards the disbelievers, striving in the cause of Allah, and not fearing the reproach of any reproacher. That is the grace of Allah, which He bestows upon whomever He wills. And Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing. Your only allies are Allah, His Messenger, and the believers, those who establish prayer and give zakat, with humble submission. Whoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and the believers as allies, it is the party of Allah that will certainly be triumphant.﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 54-56)*

The basis of allegiance is love, and there is no allegiance without love. Likewise, the basis of enmity is hatred. Allah is the Ally of the believers, and they are His allies. They are His allies through their love for Him, and He is their ally through His love for them. Allah makes allies with His slaves to the extent of His love for each one.

For this reason, He criticized those allying with anyone other than Him but not those allying with His allies. That is because they have not taken them as allies instead of Him; their allegiance to them is an essential part of their allegiance to Him. He has criticized those who love others as much as they love Him. He has informed us that whoever does so has taken a rival who is loved as He alone should be loved:

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادٗا يُحِبُّونَهُمۡ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَشَدُّ حُبّٗا لِّلَّهِۗ ... ١٦٥ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٦٥)

﴿Yet there are some people who take [for worship] others besides Allah, as equals [with Allah]; they love them as they should love Allah. But those who believe have greater love for Allah...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 165)*

He has also informed us that those who set His rivals in love as equal to Him will say in the hellfire to their objects of worship:

﴿ تَٱللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٧﴾ إِذْ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٩٧-٩٨)

﴿By Allah, we were clearly misguided when we deemed you equal to the Lord of the worlds.﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 97-98)*

With this love solely for Him were all the Messengers of Allah sent and all the Books revealed; the call of every last Messenger conformed to this invitation. The heavens, the earth, paradise, and hellfire were created for this. Paradise was created for its people, and hellfire was for those who set equals to the Lord.

The Prophet (ﷺ) swore that we could not be true believers until he is more beloved to us than our parents, children, and all the people combined. How is it with loving the mighty and majestic Lord?

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (□):

«No, not until I am more beloved to you than yourself.» (Bukhari)

He meant that we do not (fully) believe until our love for him reaches that level.

The Prophet (ﷺ) has a greater right to be loved by the believers more than they love themselves. So is the Lord – Who is Majestic, Whose names are sacred and blessed, Whose power is exalted, and Whom none else is worthy of worship – not more deserving of His slaves having greater love for Him than themselves?

Everything He grants His believing slaves invites them to love Him, whether it is something the slave likes or dislikes. See how He grants and withholds, pardons and afflicts, prevents and releases. Consider also His justice and bounty; consider how He gives death and brings to life.

Consider as well His subtlety, kindness, mercy, and grace; how He conceals, forgives, and has forbearance and patience with His slaves. Look at how He responds to their supplications, dispels their distress, and rescues them from confusion. He solves their dilemmas without needing to, as He is entirely free of any need from them. All these invite the hearts to love and deify Him.

One of the strongest evokers of His love is that He enables and aids His slaves to disobey Him, yet He conceals them until they get over this desire. All the while, He is protecting and caring for them until they no longer commit that sin; thus, even though they sin, they seek His aid (meaning, they seek the resources He provides to defy Him) and His blessings aid them. If a creature offered a fraction of this for another creature, the latter could not prevent the heart from loving the former.

How can you not then love the One Whose constant grace is as abundant as your breaths, despite all your evil doings with your heart and limbs? His good descends to you, while your evil ascends to Him. He incites your love with His blessings without needing you, while you incite His hatred through sinning, even though you are so dependent on Him. His kindness, grace, and excellence do not prevent you from sinning, and your sinning and treachery do not prevent your Lord's kindness from reaching you. It is, therefore, treachery for the hearts to love another instead of the One Who cares for them like this.

Those created beings you love, and those who love you, only want you for themselves. Allah wants you for yourself.

There is a narration that mentions, "My slave! Everyone wants you for themselves, while I want you for yourself."[312]

How can you not be ashamed when your Lord deals with you on this level, yet you turn away from Him? You are busy loving another and have filled your heart with love for someone else.

None of the creation will deal with you if they do not profit from you. They must get some form of profit.

The Lord deals with you so you can profit from Him with the greatest profit. A dirham (silver coin) is rewarded ten to seven hundred times its likes (or even more),[313] and a sin is repaid with its equivalent value and is erased faster than anything.

He has created you for Himself and everything in this world and the hereafter for you. Who, then, most deserves your efforts to please and earn their love?

He personally handles your requests and those of the entire creation, and His generosity and nobility are unmatched. He has given His slaves more than they hoped and even before they asked. He appreciates and augments the smallest good, forgives multitudes of mistakes, and even erases them altogether.

Everyone in the heavens and earth asks of Him. Every day brings about new dispensations. Hearing something never distracts Him from something else, nor is He confused by the countless requests or annoyed by those incessantly begging. He loves those who plead persistently and sincerely in their supplications. He loves to be asked, and He becomes angry when He is not asked.

He has shame for those who have no shame for themselves. He conceals them when they do not conceal themselves, and He shows mercy to them when they do not show mercy to themselves. He invites them to being honoured and pleasing Him, using His blessings, kindness, and aid, yet they refuse, so He sends His Messengers with His promise.

Abu Hurayrah reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«He (Allah) Himself comes down and asks: Is there anyone asking Me so I may grant them (their request)? Is anyone seeking My forgiveness so I may forgive them?» (Bukhari and Muslim)

This hadith implies that He sends for you, but you refuse to comply, so He sends His Messenger to find you. Then He comes down to you Himself and finds you sleeping.

How can the hearts not love Him, the One and Only, when He alone:

- Brings good and removes evil;
- Responds to our supplications;
- Repairs what we break;
- Forgives our sins;
- Conceals our faults;
- Relieves our hardships;
- Grants our wishes; and
- Rescues us when we are lost?

He deserves to be remembered more than anyone that has ever been remembered. He deserves thanks more than anyone ever thanked. He deserves worship more than anyone ever worshipped. He deserves praise more than anyone ever praised. He is greater than anyone who was ever pursued. He is more compassionate than anyone who ever owned anything. He is more generous than anyone who was ever asked anything. He is wealthier than anyone who ever gave. He is more merciful than anyone ever turned to for mercy. He is nobler than anyone who was ever sought. He is mightier than anyone ever turned to for refuge. He is more reliable than anyone ever relied upon.

He is more merciful with His slaves than a mother is with her child. He is happier with the repentance of the penitent than those in a barren desert who find their lost riding animal with the food and drink they had despaired of surviving without…[314]

He is the King, alone without partners. He is the One and Only; He has no equals. All things will perish except His Countenance. Only by His permission is He obeyed, and only with His knowledge is He disobeyed. When He is obeyed, He rewards, although it was by His favour and guidance that He was obeyed. When He is disobeyed, He forgives, pardons, and suspends His rights. He is the nearest Witness and the grandest Guardian. He is the most fulfilling of promises and the fairest upholder of justice.

He intervenes between the souls and seizes by the forelocks, and He has written the records and inscribed the lifespans. The hearts are exposed before Him, and secrets are all known to Him. The unseen to Him is unveiled, and for Him, everyone frantically searches. Faces are humbled before Him, and our minds are incapable of fathoming His nature.

Every fiṭrah and proof has proved the impossibility of anything or anyone in existence being like Him and resembling Him. The light of His Countenance has brightened the darkness, illuminated the earth and heavens, and rectified the creation's affairs.

Abu Moosâ al-Ash'ari reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«He does not sleep, and it does not befit Him to sleep.[315] He lowers the scale (of justice) and raises it. The deeds of the day ascend to Him before the night, and the deeds of the night ascend to Him before the day. His veil is light; if He removes it, the glory of His Countenance will burn every created thing that His sight reaches.» (Muslim)

*Certainly, the investor of his love elsewhere failed,*
*To be compensated, even if he owned all of existence.*

There is a matter of great importance here, which the intelligent must be aware of. It is that the most complete delight, joy, and bliss for the heart and enjoyment for the soul are the result of two matters:

1. The inherent perfection and beauty of the Supremely Beloved, and the fact that He is more deserving of being loved than anyone else.

2. Having complete love for Him, exhausting one's capacity in loving Him, and preferring to reach and draw near to Him above everything else.

Every sensible person knows that the delight experienced by attaining the beloved is proportionate to the strength of one's love. Whenever the love is stronger, the delight in that love is more complete. The delight of the severely thirsty who find fresh water and the delight of the severely hungry who get delicious food (and other similar examples) is proportionate to their degree of longing for and loving it.

Delight and happiness are innately sought. They are the objective of every living, intelligent being. Since delight is inherently sought, it is only dispraised when it results in pain that is relatively greater or when it prevents a more wonderful delight. How about when it results in the greatest regrets and squanders the ultimate delights and joys? It is only praised when it helps towards the great, permanent delight that contains no blemish. This delight is of the hereafter, its bliss, and the life of comfort there.

﴿بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴿١٦﴾ وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿١٧﴾﴾ (سورة الأعلى: ١٦-١٧)

﴿But you [O humankind] prefer the life of this world even though the hereafter is better and more lasting.﴾ *(al-A'lâ 87: 16-17)*

The magicians said to Fir'awn when they became believers:

﴿ ... فَٱقْضِ مَآ أَنتَ قَاضٍ ۖ إِنَّمَا تَقْضِى هَـٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَآ ﴿٧٢﴾ إِنَّآ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطَـٰيَـٰنَا وَمَآ أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلسِّحْرِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿٧٣﴾﴾ (سورة طه: ٧٢-٧٣)

﴿…So decide whatever you will; you can only decide matters pertaining to the life of this world. Verily, we have believed in our Lord so that He may

forgive us our sins and what you compelled us to do of magic, for Allah is better [in reward] and more lasting [in punishment].﴾ *(Ṭâ Hâ 20: 72-73)*

Allah (□) brought the creation into existence to deliver this delight to them in the eternal abode. This earthly realm is short-lived, and its delights are not pure or permanent as opposed to the hereafter, whose delights are constant. Its bliss is pure and free of any flaw or discomfort. It contains an unending life that the souls desire and the eyes enjoy. No soul knows what comforts Allah has hidden for His slaves therein. It contains what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart has ever imagined.

This meaning was intended by Fir'awn's advisor when he urged his people:[316]

﴿ ... يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱتَّبِعُونِ أَهۡدِكُمۡ سَبِيلَ ٱلرَّشَادِ ٣٨ يَٰقَوۡمِ إِنَّمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا مَتَٰعٞ وَإِنَّ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ ٱلۡقَرَارِ ٣٩ ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٣٨-٣٩)

﴿…O my people, follow me; I will guide you to the correct path. O my people, the life of this world is but a brief enjoyment, whereas it is the hereafter that is the permanent abode.﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 38-39)*

The delights and pleasures of this world are just fleeting enjoyment and a means to achieve the delights of the hereafter. Know that this is the reason this world and its delights were created. Every delight that helps to attain the delights of the hereafter is not dispraised. On the contrary, it is praised to the extent that it leads to the delight of the hereafter.

The most blissful delight in the hereafter is looking at the Lord's Countenance, the Mighty and Majestic, hearing His words, and being close to Him. This was confirmed in the hadith where Ṣuhayb reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«By Allah, He has not given them anything more beloved to them than looking at Him.» (Muslim)

‘Ammâr ibn Yâsir reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) supplicated:

«أَسْأَلُكَ لَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى وَجْهِكَ، وَالشَّوْقَ إِلَى لِقَائِكَ.»

«*As’aluka ladh-dhat an-nadhari ilâ wajhik, wash-shawqa ilâ liqâ’ik.*

(I ask You for the delight of looking at Your Countenance and the longing for Your meeting.)*»* (Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasâ’i, Ibn Ḥibbân, Ibn Khuzaymah, and al-Ḥâkim with an authentic chain of narration)

According to another marfoo‘ report:

«On the Day of Resurrection, it will be as if the people have never heard the Qur’an. Once they hear it from ar-Raḥmân (Allah, the Most Gracious), it will be as if they have never even heard it before.»[317]

The greatest way of attaining this delight in paradise follows the absolute greatest delight in life on earth – the delight of knowing Allah (□) and loving Him. That is the paradise of life on earth and its lofty enjoyment. Compared to it, the perishable worldly delights are like a drop in the ocean. The soul, heart, and body were created for it; consequently, the world’s best delight is knowing and loving Him, and the best delight in paradise is seeing Him.

Loving and knowing Him comforts the eyes, delights the souls, gives joy to the hearts, and evokes the happiness and bliss of this world. Conversely, the fleeting worldly delights that impede this will transform into agony and torment, leading to a constricted life.

The life of comfort is, therefore, only with Allah. Some of those who love Allah would experience moments where they said, “If the people of paradise have the likes of this, they live blissfully.” This has been previously mentioned.

Another used to say, “If the kings and the princes knew what we are experiencing, they would fight us for it with [their] swords.”

People with false loves, which torment the lover's heart, say about themselves:

*None is human except those who harbour 'ishq,*
*No good is there in those without love and 'ishq.*
*Pitiful is this world when its residents refrain,*
*From being loved, or if love their hearts do not contain.*
*There is no good in this world or in its joy,*
*When you are alone and 'ishq you cannot employ.*
*Find someone to love and, by that, gain tranquillity,*
*Time is fleeting, and being alone is futility.*
*The lovers complained of the outpour of love,*
*While I wished to bear what they endure single-handedly.*
*My heart would have taken the glee of love entirely;*
*No lover would have tasted it before or after me.*

How about love which is the life of the hearts and nutrition of the souls, without which the heart has no delight, enjoyment, success or life? If the heart loses this love, the pain is greater than the pain of the eye becoming blind, the ear becoming deaf, the nose being unable to smell, and the tongue being unable to speak. The harm afflicting the heart when stripped of loving its Originator, Designer, and true God is greater than the harm afflicting the body when stripped of the soul. Yet this matter is only believed by those alive, for injury causes no pain to the dead.

The point is that this world's greatest delights are the means which deliver us to the greatest delight in the hereafter.

There are three types of delight in this world:

1. The greatest and most complete delights are those that lead to the delight of the hereafter. The human being is granted the fullest reward for this type. That is why believers are rewarded when they intend to seek Allah's pleasure through eating, drinking, clothing, and marital relations. They also seek His pleasure by overcoming their anger, thus

defeating their enemy and the enemy of Allah. What about the delight of their faith, knowledge of Allah, love for Him, longing to meet Him, and hope to see His noble Countenance in the gardens of bliss?

2. The second type of delight prevents the delight of the hereafter, which results in greater pain. This delight is of those who have taken other people as idols instead of Allah in worldly life. They love them as they should love Allah, and they make use of them. When they meet their Lord in the hereafter, they will say:

﴿ ... رَبَّنَا ٱسۡتَمۡتَعَ بَعۡضُنَا بِبَعۡضٖ وَبَلَغۡنَآ أَجَلَنَا ٱلَّذِيٓ أَجَّلۡتَ لَنَاۚ قَالَ ٱلنَّارُ مَثۡوَىٰكُمۡ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٞ ١٢٨ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّي بَعۡضَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعۡضَۢا بِمَا كَانُواْ يَكۡسِبُونَ ١٢٩ ﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ١٢٨-١٢٩)

﴿…Our Lord, we used one other, but now we have reached the appointed term that You decreed for us. He will say: The fire will be your abode, to dwell therein forever, unless Allah wills otherwise, for your Lord is Most Wise, All-Knowing. Thus We cause the wrongdoers to take one another as friends and allies, because of their misdeeds.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 128-129)*

It is the same with immoral and unjust people who transgress on the earth and claim distinction without due right. In reality, these delights are an entrapment by Allah through which He ultimately makes them taste the severest pains and deprives them of the fullest delights. This is just like someone who presents others with delicious food that is poisonous to lure them to their destruction:

﴿ ... سَنَسۡتَدۡرِجُهُم مِّنۡ حَيۡثُ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ١٨٢ وَأُمۡلِي لَهُمۡۚ إِنَّ كَيۡدِي مَتِينٌ ١٨٣ ﴾ (سورة الأعراف: ١٨٢-١٨٣)

﴿…We will lead them step by step to their ruin, without their even realizing it. I will give them respite, for My stratagem is sure.﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 182-183)*

One of the salaf interpreted this, "Whenever they initiated a [new] sin, We initiated for them a [new] favour."

﴿ ... حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَرِحُواْ بِمَآ أُوتُوٓاْ أَخَذۡنَٰهُم بَغۡتَةً فَإِذَا هُم مُّبۡلِسُونَ ٤٤ فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْۚ وَٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٤٥﴾ (سورة الأنعام: ٤٤-٤٥)

﴿…until, when they were rejoicing in what they had been given, We seized them suddenly and they were plunged into utter despair. Thus the transgressors were destroyed to the last man. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 44-45)*

﴿أَيَحۡسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُم بِهِۦ مِن مَّالٖ وَبَنِينَ ٥٥ نُسَارِعُ لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡخَيۡرَٰتِۚ بَل لَّا يَشۡعُرُونَ ٥٦﴾ (سورة المؤمنون: ٥٥-٥٦)

﴿Do they think, because We grant them wealth and sons, that We hasten to them all that is good? Nay, they do not understand.﴾ *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 55-56)*

﴿فَلَا تُعۡجِبۡكَ أَمۡوَٰلُهُمۡ وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُهُمۡۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَتَزۡهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمۡ وَهُمۡ كَٰفِرُونَ ٥٥﴾ (سورة التوبة: ٥٥)

﴿So do not let their wealth and their children impress you; Allah intends only to punish them thereby in the life of this world, so that their souls will depart while they are still disbelievers.﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 55)*

In the end, these delights transform into the greatest agonies:

*Whims that tortured their bearers throughout life,*
*At resurrection become the epitome of strife.*

3. The third type of delight results in neither pleasure nor pain in the eternal abode. It does not prevent eternal delight, though it may prevent its completeness. This lawful delight is not used to attain the delight of the hereafter. Its duration is short, the carnal self has no significant gratification from it, and it inevitably distracts from what is better and more beneficial.

   The Prophet (ﷺ) referred to it when he said:

   «All idle pastimes that the Muslim man engages in are falsehood, except for the shooting of his bow, his training of his horse, and his playing with his wife, for they are from the truth.» (Recorded by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mâjah; authenticated by at-Tirmidhi, but graded weak by al-Albâni)

The true delights are those that lead towards the (ultimately) sought delight, and whatever does not lead towards it is falsehood.

This love (for Allah) is never dispraised; it is the most praiseworthy type of love, and so is loving Allah's Messenger (ﷺ). We specifically mean the love where the lover's heart, thoughts and utterances are entirely devoted to the beloved. The heart of every Muslim contains love for Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). A person does not enter Islam without it. Still, only Allah knows the disparity between individuals in this kind of love.

For instance, consider the difference between the love for Allah of His two khaleels ('special friends') (Ibrâheem and Muhammad [ﷺ]) and the love of others (for Allah). This love – not of prohibited images – lightens the burdens of responsibility, makes the stingy benevolent, makes the coward brave, clears the mind, controls the carnal self, and makes life pleasant. When the secrets are disclosed on the Day of Meeting, such people's secrets are purer than those of any other person.

This love brightens the face, expands the chest, and enlivens the heart. It is the same with loving the words of Allah, for this is one of the signs of loving Him.

If you wish to know your love for Allah, check your heart regarding loving the Qur'an. Check whether you enjoy listening to it more than the songs and music that distracted people enjoy. It is known that if someone loves a person, the words and statements of that person become the most beloved thing to them.

It was said:

*If you claimed that you love Me,*
*Then why did you forsake My Book?*
*Would you not have enjoyed My address,*
*And enjoyed its content, if you had but looked?*

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (□) mentions, "If our hearts become pure, they will never have their fill of Allah's words."

How can lovers ever have their fill of the words of their beloved and ultimate objective?

«One day, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood: Recite for me.

He replied: Recite for you, when you are the one it descended upon?

He explained: I love to hear it from others.

'Abdullâh began reciting Soorat an-Nisâ' until he reached the verse:

﴿ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍۭ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾

(سورة النساء: ٤١)

﴿How will it be when We bring a witness from every nation and bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against them [the disbelievers of Quraysh]?﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 41)*

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Enough.

‘Abdullâh lifted his head and saw the eyes of Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) streaming with tears.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Whenever the Companions gathered and saw Abu Moosâ with them, they asked him, “O Abu Moosâ! Remind us of our Lord.” He would recite, and they would listen.

The lover of the Qur’an finds feelings, pleasure, delight, sweetness, and happiness that far surpass the lover of satanic melodies. You may see a person inclined, thrilled, entertained, and longing to hear poetry more than hearing the verses and music rather than the Qur’an. A poet said:

*A khatmah is recited upon you while you are stone,*[318]
*Yet a couplet of poetry melts you to the bone.*

This is one of the greatest proofs that a person’s heart is devoid of love for Allah and His words. It proves that the heart is attached to satanic melodies, and yet deluded people believe that they are involved with something good.

Loving Allah, His words, and His Messenger (ﷺ) contains far greater fulfilment than the questioner mentions about ‘ishq and its benefits. No love is more beneficial than this. Every love other than this is vain unless it aids towards it and nourishes the lover’s yearning for it.

One is not to be blamed for loving one’s spouse. This is part of a person’s completeness (as a human being). Allah favours people with this:

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢١)

﴿Among His signs is this: He created for you from among yourselves spouses, so that you might find comfort in them, and He has instilled love and compassion between you. Verily, in that there are signs for people who reflect.﴾ *(ar-Room 30: 21)*

Allah has made women a means of tranquillity for men. A man's heart finds tranquillity with her. Allah has placed pure love between them through affection and mercy. The Most High indicates after mentioning women:

﴿يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمۡ وَيَهۡدِيَكُمۡ سُنَنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيۡكُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ ٢٦ وَٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَيُرِيدُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ أَن تَمِيلُواْ مَيۡلًا عَظِيمٗا ٢٧ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمۡۚ وَخُلِقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ ضَعِيفٗا ٢٨﴾ (سورة النساء: ٢٦-٢٨)

﴿Allah wants to make things clear to you and to guide you to the [righteous] ways of those who came before you; and [He wants to] turn to you in mercy; and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise. Allah wants to turn to you in mercy, but those who follow their lusts want you to drift far away from the right path. Allah wants to lighten your burdens, for man was created weak.﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 26-28)*

Sufyân ath-Thawri mentions in his *Tafseer* that Ibn Ṭâwoos narrated from his father, "If he looks at women, he cannot be patient."[319]

There is also the hadith of Jâbir:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) saw a woman. He proceeded to Zaynab, satisfied his desire with her, and remarked: Indeed, a woman approaches in the image of a devil and walks away in the image of a devil. If you see a woman who attracts you, go to your spouse, for she will quench your desire.» (Muslim)

This hadith contains several benefits. One of them is guiding us to substitute one desire for another similar desire, such as substituting one meal for another meal or one garment for another. Another is the command to remedy attraction to a woman when the desire for her is ignited. The most beneficial remedy for this is satisfying the desire through the spouse. That will extinguish the desire for the former.

This (command) is consistent with the (prophetic) directive for lovers to get married. It is mentioned in a marfoo‘ report:

«Marriage is the most beneficial thing for those who love one another.» (Recorded by Ibn Mâjah, al-Ḥâkim, al-Bayhaqi, and al-Booṣayri with an authentic chain of trustworthy narrators)

Marrying the object of ‘ishq is the remedy for adoration; this has been established legislatively and experientially.

In the story of Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, Zayd was determined to divorce her, but she disagreed. He consulted the Prophet (ﷺ) about divorcing her, and he instructed him to keep her. Later, he told Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) that he would divorce her. The Prophet (ﷺ) concealed his intention to marry her if Zayd divorced her. He feared the people would say that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) had married his adopted son’s wife. He had adopted Zayd before prophethood, but the Lord wished to establish a general law involving many benefits for His people.

> When Zayd divorced her and she concluded her *‘iddah* [waiting period] from him, the Prophet [ﷺ] sent him to ask her to get engaged to him. Zayd stood behind her door. He now considered her unlawful for him since Allah’s Messenger [ﷺ] had spoken of her. He called to her from behind the door: O Zaynab, the Messenger of Allah [ﷺ] wants to get engaged to you.
>
> She replied: I will not do anything before I consult my Lord.
>
> She went over to her place of prayer and prayed. Allah Himself married her to His Messenger [ﷺ], effected her marriage from above His Throne, and the revelation came declaring that:
>
> ﴿ ...فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَٰكَهَا ... ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٧)
>
> ﴿…When Zayd had completed the necessary formalities of divorce from her [and her ‘iddah had ended], We gave her to you in

marriage…﴾ *(al-Aḥzâb 33: 37)*

At once, Allah's Messenger [ﷺ] stood and entered her room.

Anas narrated:

«…She (Zaynab) would boast in front of the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) about that and exclaim: You all were married through your families, but I was married directly through Allah from above the seven skies.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

This is the story of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and Zaynab. Women were made beloved to the Prophet (ﷺ), as the following hadith narrated by Anas indicates:

«From this world of yours, women and pleasant scents have been made beloved to me, and my ultimate comfort was made to be in the prayer.» (A reliable hadith recorded by an-Nasa'i)

This is the correct wording of the hadith, not as some narrate, "Three things have been made beloved to me from this world of yours…"[320]

An addition to this hadith is in Imam Aḥmad's book *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, "I can patiently keep away from food and drink, but I cannot patiently keep away from them [his wives]."

Allah's enemies, both the Jews and the Christians, envied him for this. They stated that his only concern was marital relations. Allah (□) responds on behalf of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and defends him:

﴿ أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۖ فَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ ءَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مُّلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ٥٤)

﴾Or do they envy [other] people for what Allah has given them of His bounty? But We gave the family of Ibrâheem the scripture and wisdom, and gave them a great kingdom.﴿ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 54)*

Ibrâheem (□), the khaleel of Allah, the Imam of the Ḥaneef(s), was married to Sârah, the most beautiful woman in the world. Yet, he still loved Ḥâjar and married her as well.

Similarly, Prophet Sulaymân (as) would visit ninety women in a single night.[321]

It was reported:

«Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was asked: Who do you love the most?

He replied: 'Â'ishah.» (Bukhari and at-Tirmidhi)

He said about Khadeejah:

«I was provided with her love.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Loving women is part of the completeness of a human being. Ibn 'Abbâs indicates, "The best of this Ummah is the one with the most wives."[322]

The Prophet (ﷺ) interceded for someone afflicted with 'ishq and requested that his object of adoration marry him, but she refused. This was the story of Mugheeth and Bareerah:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) saw him walking behind Bareerah after their separation with tears rolling down his cheeks.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) asked her: Why will you not take him back?

She asked him: Do you command me to, O Messenger of Allah?

He replied: No, I am just a mediator.

She replied: I do not need him.

He remarked to his uncle: O 'Abbâs, are you not amazed at Mugheeth's love for Bareerah and her hatred for him?» (Bukhari)

He did not blame him for loving her, even though she had broken things off with him, for that was beyond his control.

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to divide his attention equally between his wives and say, as narrated by ‘Â’ishah:

«O Allah, this is my division concerning what I control, so do not blame me concerning what You control and I do not.» (Recorded by Abu Dâwood, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasâ’i, Ibn Mâjah, and Aḥmad with a weak chain of narration)

He was referring to his (feelings of) love. The Most High mentions:

﴿ وَلَن تَسۡتَطِيعُوٓاْ أَن تَعۡدِلُواْ بَيۡنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَلَوۡ حَرَصۡتُمۡۖ ... ﴿١٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٢٩)

﴿You will never be able to treat your wives with absolute equity, however much you may desire to do so…﴾ *(an-Nisâ’ 4: 129)*

This means in love and intercourse.

Additionally, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the merciful people regularly interceded between those plagued with ‘ishq and those they adored whenever joining them together was lawful. This has been previously mentioned regarding Abu Bakr and ‘Uthmân.

‘Ali, the Leader of the Faithful, is also reported to have interceded, as the following incident indicated:

A young man was brought before him who had been found inside someone’s house one night.

He asked him: What were you doing there?

He replied: I am no thief, and I will tell you the truth:

*I became attached to Khawdah in ar-Rabâḥi’s house,*
*She whose beauty shames the fullest moon,*

*Her beauty surpasses the ladies of Rome,*
*If she brags of beauty, the braggers all swoon.*
*When I knocked on their door to calm my heart,*
*And spend the night there to temper my typhoon,*
*The people of the house attacked me and yelled:*
*A thief! Kill and jail this menacing goon.*

When ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib heard his poetry, he was moved by it and told al-Muhallab ibn Rabâḥi: Permit him to have her.

He replied: O Leader of the Faithful, ask him who he is.

The young man replied: An-Nahhâs ibn ‘Uyaynah.

He told him: Take her; she is yours.[323]

Az-Zamakhshari mentioned in his *Rabee‘*:

Along the road to Makkah, Zubaydah read on a wall:

*Among the slaves of Allah, to see I would be glad,*
*A noble who heals someone who’s gone mad.*
*He has eyes, though his eyeballs are most sore,*
*As for his feelings, the fire within makes them roar.*

She vowed to help their speaker if she could find him, and unite him and his beloved. During her stay in Muzdalifah, she heard someone reciting the same two couplets and tracked him down.[324]

He claimed to have said them about the daughter of his paternal uncle, whose family had vowed not to marry her to him. She headed towards that town and continued to give them wealth until they married her to him. It turned out that the woman was even more in love with him than he was with her. She would consider it one of her greatest good deeds and say: Nothing pleases me more than uniting that lad and his lady.[325]

Jâmi‘ ibn Murḥibah relates:

I asked Sa‘eed ibn al-Musayyib, the mufti of Madinah: Is there sin in love that suddenly overtakes us?

Sa‘eed replied: You are only blamed for what you can do. By Allah, no one has ever asked me about this; had they asked me, I would have given them this reply only.

There are three types of ‘ishq:

1. ‘Ishq that constitutes an act of obedience and nearness (to Allah). This is a man’s love for his wife or slave girl. This is beneficial love, for it serves the objectives for which Allah has legislated marriage. It restrains the eyes and heart from being interested in other than the spouse. Therefore, this ‘ishq is praiseworthy in the sight of Allah and others.

2. ‘Ishq that incurs Allah’s anger, which keeps away His mercy. This is the most dangerous thing for a man’s worldly life and hereafter, and is known as lust for young men. The only ones afflicted with this are those who have fallen from Allah’s favour and been expelled from His door, and whose hearts have been distanced from Him. It is one of the greatest barriers that keep people away from Allah, as one of the salaf said, “When a man falls out of Allah’s favour, He is afflicted with loving young men.”

This wild passion brought punishment upon the people of Looṭ. Their demise was solely because of extreme lust:

﴿ لَعَمۡرُكَ إِنَّهُمۡ لَفِي سَكۡرَتِهِمۡ يَعۡمَهُونَ ٧٢ ﴾ (سورة الحِجر: ٧٢)

﴿By your life [O Muhammad], they were wandering blindly in their lustful frenzy.﴾ *(al-Ḥijr 15: 72)*

The remedy to this disease is to beg the Turner of the Hearts (Allah) for rescue. One should genuinely appeal to Him, keep occupied with His remembrance, and substitute His love and nearness for that immoral lust. One should recall the pain from this evil infatuation and the delights one squanders. Due to it, one loses the greatest Supremely Beloved and acquires the greatest misfortune. If the carnal self still proceeds towards this and prefers it, let the person make takbeer and perform janâzah upon it, and let him know that affliction has surrounded it.[326]

3. Lawful ‘ishq that cannot be controlled. This is like attraction to a person of the opposite gender whose beauty had been described or was suddenly seen unintentionally, which evoked longing but did not result in sin. This is beyond one’s control and is not punishable. Still, repelling it and keeping busy with something more beneficial is better. One must conceal it and remain chaste and patient through this tribulation. Allah (□) rewards for that and compensates for the patience, chastity, and refusal to follow one’s desires, and for preferring His pleasure and reward above all.

There are three types of people with ‘ishq. Some of them adore everything of beauty. Some adore a specific beauty regardless of whether or not they hope to attain it. Others have adoration only for those whom they can reach.

There is a great difference between the respective strengths and weaknesses of each. Those attracted to everything of beauty have a heart with longing in every valley, and they long for every beautiful image. These people’s longing is vast but unstable and is constantly pivoting.

*He adores this one, then has ‘ishq for another,*
*And by morning, it he forgot and it he did smother.*

Those attracted to a specific beauty are more consistent in their love for their object of adoration, for it is all focused upon one. It (their

attraction) is weakened once they lose hope of reaching it.

Those attracted to what they have hopes of reaching are the wisest and the most prudent of those with longing. This love is the strongest, for it is fuelled and strengthened by hope.

The *ḥuffâdh* of Islam have rejected the hadith narrated by Suwayd ibn Sa‘eed, “Whoever has ‘ishq but remains chaste…”[327]

Ibn ‘Adiy states in his *al-Kâmil*, “This is among the hadiths of Suwayd which have been rejected.”[328]

The same has been mentioned by al-Bayhaqi and Ibn Ṭâhir,[329] and Ibn al-Jawzi listed it in his *al-Mawḍoo‘ât.*[330]

Despite his leniency, even Abu ‘Abdullâh al-Ḥâkim rejected it, indicating that he was sceptical of it.

I say that the correct position is that this is a mawqoof (restricted) report; it is the wording of Ibn ‘Abbâs and Suwayd mistakenly attributed it to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Muhammad ibn Khalf al-Mirzibân stated that Abu Bakr al-Azraq narrated this to him from Suwayd, so he criticized him for that. Thereafter, he would always omit the name of the Prophet (ﷺ); whenever he was asked about this report, he no longer attributed it to him.

Moreover, this does not resemble the Prophet’s statements.

As for the marfoo‘ chain of this reported by al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, this is the most obvious mistake. It cites from az-Zuhri that al-Mu‘âfâ ibn Zakariyâ narrated to him, that Quṭbah ibn al-Faḍl narrated to him, that Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Masrooq narrated to him, that Suwayd narrated to him, that Ibn Mus-hir narrated to him, from Hishâm ibn ‘Urwah, from his father, from ‘Â’ishah, attributing it upwards to the Prophet (ﷺ). Anyone with even basic knowledge of hadiths knows it is impossible for something like this to be narrated by Hishâm, his father, and ‘Â’ishah.

Allah is our witness that ‘Â’ishah never narrated this from Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ), nor did ‘Urwah narrate this from her, nor did Hishâm (his son) ever narrate this from him.

Regarding the report of Ibn al-Mâjishoon that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) looked at Zaynab bint Jaḥsh (□) and said, “Glorified is the Turner of the Hearts,” this is forged in the name of Ibn al-Mâjishoon. He did not narrate this, nor did az-Zubayr ibn Bakkâr narrate this from him. This (chain of narrators) is the construction of one of the fabricators.

*Subḥân Allâh*! How could such a chain of narrators transmit something like this? May Allah destroy the fabricators.

Abul-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi mentioned the narration of Muhammad ibn Ja‘far ibn Sahl, “Ya‘qoob ibn ‘Eesâ narrated to us from the son of ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ibn ‘Awf, from Abu Nujayḥ, a marfoo‘ report from Mujâhid.”[331] This is also an obvious mistake, for Muhammad ibn Ja‘far is al-Kharâ’iṭi who died in 327 AH. This makes it impossible for him to have met the previous person (in the chain), which is Ya‘qoob ibn Abi Nujayḥ. When he recorded it in his book *al-I‘tilâl*,[332] it was from this Ya‘qoob. It was also mentioned as being from az-Zubayr, from ‘Abdul-Malik ibn ‘Abdul-‘Azeez, from Ibn Abi Nujayḥ.

This al-Kharâ’iṭi is known to be a weak narrator, and Ibn al-Jawzi mentioned him in *Kitâb aḍ-Ḍu‘afâ’*.[333]

We should refer to the statements of the ḥuffâdh of Islam regarding rejecting this hadith as the accurate gauge. It has neither been authenticated nor deemed reliable by anyone known to be well-versed in the science of Hadith. Even those usually not stringent have denied it. It is sufficient that even Ibn Ṭâhir (who is not stringent in hadiths regarding Sufism and records both sensible and preposterous reports) denied it and testified to its invalidity.[334]

It is not unbelievable that this report would come from Ibn ‘Abbâs.[335]

At the same time, Abu Muhammad ibn Ḥazm mentions:

Ibn ‘Abbâs was asked about someone who died of ‘ishq, and he replied: A murder victim of desire; he has no mind and does not receive any compensation.[336]

However, there is this report about Ibn ‘Abbâs:

A young man was brought before him on Mount ‘Arafah who had become as thin as a chicken.

He asked: What is the matter with him?

They replied: ‘Ishq.

He then spent his entire day seeking refuge from ‘ishq.

Hence, it was this same Ibn ‘Abbâs who said, “Whoever has ‘ishq but remains chaste and conceals it until death is a martyr.”

What clarifies this (not being a hadith) further is that the Prophet (ﷺ) listed in *aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥ* the class of martyrs as those killed in jihad or by an abdominal disease, fire, pleurisy or drowning, and women who die in childbirth. He did not mention the lovers who are killed by ‘ishq,[337] but this statement of Ibn ‘Abbâs is still sufficient (consolation) for the murder victim of ‘ishq.[338] However, the person is not included in this unless they are patient for Allah, remain chaste for Him, and conceal it for His sake. This can only occur when the person can attain their object of adoration but gives precedence to their love of Allah, fear of Him, and His pleasure.

This is also the most deserving class of people to fall under these statements of the Most High:

﴿وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾﴾ (سورة النازعات: ٤٠-٤١)

﴿But as for the one who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from base desires, verily paradise will be his abode.﴾ *(an-Nâzi'ât 79: 40-41)*

﴿ وَلِمَنۡ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة الرحمن: ٤٦)

﴿For him who fears standing before his Lord there will be two gardens.﴾ *(ar-Raḥmân 55: 46)*

We ask Allah, the Most Great, the Lord of the noble Throne, to enable us to prefer His love over our desires, and seek His nearness and pleasure through it.

The blessed book is finished, and all praise is for Allah outwardly and inwardly – praise that matches His favours and repays His kindness. The noble verdict has been completed with the blessing and aid of Allah.

May Allah (□) reward Ibn al-Qayyim with the most complete reward and grant him residence in the highest gardens of al-Firdaws with his parents, children, teachers, and students. May He also grant His blessings to me and my offspring and gather us with them in the gardens of al-Firdaws under the flag of the chief of the Messengers, the imam of the pious, and the commander of those (resurrected) with shining faces and limbs. May the blessings of Allah be upon the Prophet (ﷺ), his family, all his Companions, and those who firmly follow them. Finally, all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.[339]

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# Appendix 1: Jihad

This appendix appears in
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Jihad is the struggle against all forms of evil and injustice, both within one's own self (*nafs*) and against others. Thus, jihad is not limited to the use of military force, although such armed struggle is one form of it, and in that sense, jihad has been practiced and sanctioned by all nations since the beginning of time. After all, there is no nation in our world that does not have an army, and in all nations, martyrdom is seen as the ultimate sacrifice. War, then, may be good or bad, depending on the motives of those who engage in it and their conduct during and after the campaign. We believe that armed struggle was prescribed in Islam to defend not only Muslims but also non-Muslims who suffer from oppression, as well as to

support God's cause of justice on Earth. It was also meant to protect the right to worship God, Who created us, in complete security; it is natural that He would want that right granted to His servants.

There are, however, certain Qur'an verses that may be taken out of context and wrongly described as a declaration of endless war against the unbelievers. For example, Allah (□) says:

﴿ ... وَقَٰتِلُواْ ٱلۡمُشۡرِكِينَ كَآفَّةٗ كَمَا يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمۡ كَآفَّةٗ ... ٣٦ ﴾

(سورة التوبة: ٣٦)

﴿…and fight against the polytheists collectively as they fight against you collectively…﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 36)*

And:

﴿ فَإِذَا ٱنسَلَخَ ٱلۡأَشۡهُرُ ٱلۡحُرُمُ فَٱقۡتُلُواْ ٱلۡمُشۡرِكِينَ حَيۡثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمۡ ... ٥ ﴾ (سورة التوبة: ٥)

﴿And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them…﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 5)*

While the vast majority of Muslims do not think that we should be fighting perpetually against the rest of humanity, a fringe minority of mostly youth, inflamed by the real and perceived injustices committed against Muslim peoples, use these verses and others to wage jihad against all of their opponents, both Muslims and non-Muslims. Lacking any means to wage conventional wars, they resort to terrorism to pursue their agenda or to avenge themselves against the enemies who fight them. Such is the dilemma that Muslims are facing nowadays and that mars the name of jihad.

It is true that the verses cited are the words of Allah, Most High. He also said:

﴿ قَٰتِلُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَلَا بِٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ ٱلۡحَقِّ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ حَتَّىٰ يُعۡطُواْ ٱلۡجِزۡيَةَ عَن يَدٖ وَهُمۡ صَٰغِرُونَ ٢٩ ﴾ (سورة التوبة: ٢٩)

﴿Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth [that is, Islam] from those who were given the Scripture – [fight] until they give the jizyah [poll tax] willingly while they are humbled.﴾ *(at-Tawbah 9: 29)*

He also said:

﴿وَقَٰتِلُوهُمۡ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتۡنَةٞ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِۖ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوۡاْ فَلَا عُدۡوَٰنَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ١٩٣ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٩٣)

﴿Fight them until there is no [more] fitnah and [until] religion [that is, worship] is [acknowledged to be] for Allah. But if they cease, then there is to be no aggression except against the oppressors.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 193)*

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللهِ، وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ، وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ، فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ، عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ، إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللهِ تَعَالَى»

«I was commanded to fight the people until they testify that none is worthy of worship except Allah, and (until) they believe in me and what I came with. If they do that, then they have safeguarded their blood and wealth from me, except according to it (Islam), and their judgment is upon Allah.» (Agreed upon, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah)

Not only that, but in previous scriptures, namely the Bible, much more than this is attributed to God, including the killing of infants and children, referred to in the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, and others.[340] Certainly, we do not believe that those statements about children and infants are from God, because it would be too hard to provide context that could explain them. However, in Islam, there is an explanatory context for all of these verses. First, it is important to note that Allah (□) also says:

﴿ ۞ وَإِن جَنَحُوا۟ لِلسَّلْمِ فَٱجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنفال: ٦١)

﴿And if they incline to peace, then incline to it [also] and rely upon Allah. Indeed, it is He Who is the Hearing, the Knowing.﴾ *(al-Anfâl 8: 61)*

﴿ ... فَإِنِ ٱعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ٩٠)

﴿...So if they remove themselves from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not made for you a cause [for fighting] against them.﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 90)*

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لاَ تَتَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ وَاسْأَلُوا اللهَ الْعَافِيَةَ فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُوهُمْ فَاصْبِرُوا وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ ظِلاَلِ السُّيُوفِ»

«O people, do not wish to meet the enemy, and ask Allah for pardon. But if you meet them, be patient and know that paradise is under the shade of the swords.» (Agreed upon, on the authority of 'Abdullâh ibn Abi Awfâ)

Who should be connecting the dots and reconciling the seemingly conflicting reports? The scholars well-grounded in the tradition. One of them, namely Imam Ibn Taymiyah, wrote a treatise on *Qitâl al-Kuffâr wa*

*Muhâdanatuhum* [War and peace (treaties) with the disbelievers], in which he showed conclusively that the *'illah* (effective cause) for fighting them is their aggression, not their disbelief. He pointed out that the texts implying an open fight against them can never be used as proof for fighting the people at large, because they appear to contradict other evidences (some of which is mentioned above), the consensus, and even the life of the Messenger (ﷺ) himself. Some of them appear to suggest fighting the people at large until there is no religion on Earth except Islam – yet this is contrary to the consensus. Do you not see that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) made peace and truces with non-Muslims? In fact, he said:

«دَعُوا الْحَبَشَةَ مَا وَدَعُوكُمْ وَاتْرُكُوا التُّرْكَ مَا تَرَكُوكُمْ»

«Leave the Abyssinians alone so long as they leave you (alone), and leave the Turks (alone) as long as they leave you alone.» (Abu Dâwood, and deemed ḥasan by al-Albâni in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jâmi'*)

This clearly indicates that the command to fight does not apply to the people at large. Rather, Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah bestow mercy upon him) said in *Hidâyat al-Hayârâ* [Guiding the bewildered]:

> When Allah sent His Messenger [ﷺ], most of the religions willingly submitted to him and to his caliphs after him. He never forced the religion upon anyone, and he would only fight those who fought and warred against him. As for those who made peace with him, he did not fight them or compel them to embrace his religion, out of compliance with the command of his Lord [□], Who says:
>
> ﴿لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشۡدُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَيِّ ... ﴿٢٥٦﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٥٦)
>
> ﴿There is no compulsion in religion; truth has been made clear from falsehood...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 256)*

These verses and hadiths, which appear to enjoin fighting the people at large, were referring to specific peoples during the Prophet's time, or to

fighting in specific circumstances – such as defending the oppressed in accordance with the words of the Most High:

﴿وَمَا لَكُمۡ لَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلۡمُسۡتَضۡعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلۡوِلۡدَٰنِ ... ﴿٧٥﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ٧٥)

﴿And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah and [for] the oppressed among men, women, and children…﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 75)*

– or to prevent tyrants from forcing those who embraced Islam to abandon worshipping Allah, the One and Only, as in the words of the Most High:

﴿وَقَٰتِلُوهُمۡ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتۡنَةٞ ... ﴿١٩٣﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٩٣)

﴿And fight them until there is no [more] fitnah…﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 193)*

– or preemptively against (genuine, not imaginary) enemy aggression, as the Muslims did when the Persians sent troops to arrest the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), or when the Romans incited their allies, the Christians of Shâm, against the Muslims. The Christians blocked the Muslims' roadways and surrounded their trade caravans, and the ally of the Romans, Shurahbeel ibn 'Amr al-Ghassâni, killed al-Ḥârith ibn 'Amr al-Azdi, who was the Prophet's messenger to the ruler of Busra.

Scholars in the past entertained the following question: Is the default in international relations peace or warfare? The majority viewed peace as the default, while others believed it was warfare, although some of the latter may have been referring to the situation at their time, when they had no stable borders or statehood as we know it. Empires were constantly fighting against others to expand their territories (as can be seen in any infographics showing the changes in the map of Europe over the last one thousand years). If we pose this question to them again, using different wording, asking, "Do we prefer peace or warfare?", perhaps all of them would

answer in favor of peace. Did not the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, in addition to all of the aforementioned?

«Indeed, Allah is gentle and loves gentleness, and He grants because of gentleness what He does not grant because of harshness, nor what He grants because of anything else.» (Agreed upon, on the authority of ‘Â’ishah, and this is the wording of Muslim)

If a nation that essentially rules with justice makes peace with us, grants security to the Muslims within its borders, and does not persecute us, then why should we fight them? If our objectives are that no one is deprived of the right to worship their Lord in peace, that no tyrant subjugates any of the creation of Allah, and that no one threatens the interests of our Ummah, and we can attain all that peacefully, is fighting still justified? Would choosing it in these circumstances embody the gentleness that Allah loves in all matters?

Even after all this discussion, we have still not looked at the essence of the matter in question: war. Was war one thousand years ago the same as war today? This is not an insignificant inquiry because applying the legislative rulings correctly is contingent upon understanding the current reality in the place where these specific rulings are to be applied. In our age, the structure of nations has become stabilized and the borders of these nations have become distinct, in contrast to previous ages when nations did not rule themselves. Instead, they were ruled by dynasties and factions whose sovereignty would expand and then contract, only to be occupied by another.

In the past, the ruling factions fought on the battlefield, but this fighting rarely harmed ordinary people, farmers, women, or the weak. Furthermore, the masses would enjoy the rule of a just nation that replaced the tyranny that they had lived under for decades or centuries. This would bring them joy, just as the Christians of Shâm were overjoyed when the Muslims liberated them from Rome and its allies. But nowadays, the price of warfare is widespread chaos, corruption, and tragedy that do not

differentiate between soldiers and civilians – for bombs and rockets are not like arrows and spears. If Imam Ibn Taymiyah ruled that a catapult could not be used except for the necessary jihad (to repel the enemy),[341] what would he say about modern weapons of war?

In the past, jihad was sometimes necessary to secure the deliverance of *da'wah* to the entire creation, for it removed the obstacles, such as the tyrants and their oppressive regimes, that were preventing it. In our times, the deliverance of the da'wah is possible through the jihad of articulation and the tongue, via broadcasts, satellite channels, and especially the Internet, which delivers written, audible, and visual statements alike. Furthermore, the *du'ât* can travel to distant lands, mix with their people, and invite them, while enjoying security throughout.

To conclude this point, we can never deny the virtue of jihad and martyrdom in Islam and its raising its people upon courage, dignity, honor, and sacrifice. However, we must also be confident that Islam decisively prefers peace over war.

The default for the relationship with United Nations member states is that of peace. All the Muslim states who signed the charter of this organization committed to peace with the rest of the signatory states. Such a covenant is acceptable in Islam and makes all the world, by default, a land of *muwâda'ah* (peace). The Ḥanafi *fuqahâ'* declared that *al-muwâda'at al-mutlaqah* (a peace treaty without an agreed-upon term) is one of the types of valid treaties.[342] There is a difference of opinion on this issue among the Shâfi'i and Ḥanbali schools, but Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751 AH/ 1350 CE), the famous Ḥanbali jurist and disciple of Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728 AH/ 1328 CE), made a strong case for the validity of such treaties.[343] Imam Muhammad ibn Idrees ash-Shâfi'i (d. 204 AH/ 820 CE) has himself explicitly stated that such a treaty is valid if the parties are given the option to terminate the treaty at will.[344] 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân made a treaty with the Nubians that stated:

> We (Muslims) shall not wage war against you, prepare for war against you, or attack you, as long as you observe the conditions of the treaty between us and you… But it will not be incumbent upon the Muslims to drive away any enemy who may encounter you, or to prevent him from you, between the limits of the territory of Ulwah and Aswan.[345]

There is another pertinent discussion here, which is that the war that Islam deems justifiable, at times, is an ethical war that must also be Sharia-complaint. It is a war where the civilians, or to be more precise, all non-combatants, are spared. Abu Dâwood reported from Anas that when they had to go to war, the Prophet (ﷺ) would instruct them not to kill "an older man, a child, or a woman," and he would say, "Do righteousness and show kindness, for Allah loves those who are kind." Ibn Mâjah added that the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade killing the *'aseef*, which is best translated as a non-combatant attachment to the army.

May Allah bring peace, justice, and security to the distressed and suffering among humankind.

# Appendix 2: Slavery

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The issue of slavery may be one of the hardest issues to discuss. Our collective conscience as a global community is extremely averse to the discussion because of a variety of factors, not least of which is the cruel treatment that slaves suffered for centuries. Many preachers find it difficult to talk about the issue, particularly when they are asked why Islam's stance did not mandate the immediate and absolute abolition of slavery. Furthermore, classical books of Islamic law contain extensive discussions of the rulings pertaining to the slaves, causing discomfort to many educators who must address them. In the following discussion, I will attempt to highlight some of the facts about Islam's stance on slavery.

## A Historical Matter

To begin with, any discussion of slavery in Islam that does not put the issue in its proper historical context will be flawed. No heavenly religion sought to eliminate the institution of slavery more than Islam did. It would welcome the current state of abolishment of slavery worldwide, and it would certainly be keen on all the nations of the world maintaining this state. A central credo of conduct for Muslims is that when they engage in any agreement, they must comply with it, for Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَوۡفُواْ بِٱلۡعُقُودِ ... ١﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١)

﴿O you who have believed, fulfill [all] contracts…﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 1)*

This defense of the Islamic stance on slavery, and its description of the excellent treatment of the slaves in Islam is, therefore, only a topic of theological and historical importance, not a practical matter.

## Never Racist

The second important point to highlight is that slavery in Islam was never a racist practice. In the early history of the Muslim state, there were slaves from all nations, and even before Islam, the Arabs had slaves of all races. The most famous slaves in the history of Islam were the Prophet's esteemed Companions Salmân the Persian, Bilâl the Abyssinian, and Ṣuhayb the Roman (ﷺ). Indeed, as British historian S. H. Leeder writes, the issue of color was irrelevant to the early Muslims.

> "TAKE away that black man!" exclaimed the Christian Archbishop Cyrus. "I can have no discussion with him!" when the Arab conquerors had sent a deputation of their ablest men to discuss terms

> of surrender of the capital of Egypt, headed by the negro Ubâdah, as the ablest of them all. To the scared archbishop's astonishment, he was told that this man was commissioned by the General Amr; that the Moslems held negroes and white men in equal respect – judging a man by his character and not by his colour.[346]

This is not to claim that there have never been racist Muslims. Racism is a human condition that arises from egoism and is manifested in different forms, such as tribalism, groupism, classism, nationalism, and so on. The closer and more devoted you become to Allah, the less egoistic you will be. The information here is about the institution of slavery in its theory, governing laws, and communal legal practice. Throughout the history of Islamic states, slaves came from all backgrounds; in fact, through most of Islamic history, they were from non-African nations, since there were not many conquests in sub-Saharan Africa. As in the Far East, those nations mostly came into the fold of Islam without war.

## Slavery before Islam and in Other Religions

Slavery existed before Islam, and it spanned nearly every culture, nationality, and religion. While it may not have been known among hunter-gatherer populations, it was a part of every ancient civilization. In both a socio-geographic and religious context, slavery was normalized and tolerated worldwide, including in pre-Columbian America. Slavery was also common in Africa; in non-Muslim Africa, it was associated with pagan practices such as burying one or two young slaves alive next to the body of their deceased master. The spread of Islam is credited with ending this practice.[347]

Research shows that no religion encouraged the ending of the practice as much as Islam did; likewise, no religion encouraged the beneficent treatment of the slaves as much as Islam did.

Here are some mentions of slavery in the Bible. (Note that the newer translations have changed the word ‘slave’ to ‘servant’.)

Numbers 31: 17-18, NIV

> Now kill all the boys. And kill every woman who has slept with a man, but save for yourselves every girl who has never slept with a man.

This statement, attributed to Moosâ (□), clearly allows capturing, enslaving and having sex with young women.

Leviticus 25: 44-46, NIV

> Your male and female slaves are to come from the nations around you; from them you may buy slaves. You may also buy some of the temporary residents living among you and members of their clans born in your country, and they will become your property. You can bequeath them to your children as inherited property and can make them slaves for life, but you must not rule over your fellow Israelites ruthlessly...

Exodus 21: 2-11, GNB

> If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out as a free man without payment. If he comes alone, he shall go out alone; if he is the husband of a wife, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master gives him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall belong to her master, and he shall go out alone. But if the slave plainly says, “I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,” then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him

to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently.

American historian and philosopher Will Durant describes the position of the Church as follows:

> The Church did not condemn slavery. Orthodox and heretic, Roman and barbarian alike assumed the institution to be natural and indestructible; a few philosophers protested, but they too had slaves… Pagan laws condemned to slavery any free woman who married a slave; the laws of Constantine ordered the woman to be executed, and the slave to be burned alive. The Emperor Gratian decreed that a slave who accused his master of any offense except high treason to the state should be burned alive at once, without inquiring into the justice of the charge.[348]

## Islam's Answer to the Dilemma of Slavery

It may be said that Islam did not take an absolute abolitionist stance on the institution of slavery, and this is true to some extent. One must remember, though, that during the time of the ministry of the Prophet (ﷺ), not only was the immediate abolitionist approach not proposed by any religious or secular order, but it would have been infeasible. Furthermore, it might have resulted in social and economic turmoil, not only for the larger communities, but firstly for the many slaves who would have been unable to fend for themselves.

In addition, the issue of how to handle war captives made slavery the surest path to saving their lives. In the past, armies could not keep the captives in prison and provide for them due to the scarcity of resources.

Freeing them was not always possible because they could regroup and go back to fighting.

Finally, since the enslavement of captives was a common practice of all armies, it would have been unexpected for the Muslims to free all the captives when they won a battle but still be taken as captives when they lost.

Islam's answer to the dilemma of slavery can be summarized in two major points:

1. Gradual diminishment of the institution by simultaneously cutting off its tributaries and widening its runoffs
2. Enjoining the excellent treatment of slaves for as long as the institution survived

In the following paragraphs, I will address these two points.

## The Gradual Diminishment of the Institution of Slavery

When one wishes to drain a river of its water, there are two methods: cutting off its tributaries (sources) and increasing its runoffs. Before Islam, a person could be condemned into slavery through various means, including a man selling his own wife or child, child abandonment, debt-slavery, captivity in war, kidnapping, and as a punishment for certain crimes. Islam cut off all of those tributaries that fed into the river of slavery except for one: captivity in war, for, as mentioned previously, it was a logistical necessity at times and, more importantly, enslavement helped protect the captives' lives. Despite that, Islam recommended freeing those captives. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«فُكُّوا الْعَانِيَ يَعْنِي الْأَسِيرَ وَأَطْعِمُوا الْجَائِعَ وَعُودُوا المرِيض»

«Free the captives, feed the hungry, and visit the sick.» (Bukhari)

## Islam's Encouragement of the Emancipation of Slaves

Evidence from the Qur'an and the Sunnah makes it clear that the emancipation of slaves is considered one of the greatest virtues and ways to earn the Lord's pleasure.

Allah (□) said:

﴿وَهَدَيْنَٰهُ ٱلنَّجْدَيْنِ ﴿١٠﴾ فَلَا ٱقْتَحَمَ ٱلْعَقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْعَقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾ فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾﴾ (سورة البلد: ١٠-١٣)

﴿And have shown him [humankind] the two ways [of good and evil]? But he has not broken through the difficult pass [to righteousness]. And what can make you know what is [breaking through] the difficult pass? It is the freeing of a slave.﴾ *(al-Balad 90: 10-13)*

﴿۞ لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ وَءَاتَى ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ ... ﴿١٧٧﴾﴾

(سورة البقرة: ١٧٧)

﴿Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the

angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 177)*

Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من أَعْتَقَ رَقَبَةً مُسْلِمَةً أَعْتَقَ الله بِكُلِّ عُضْوٍ منه عُضْوًا من النَّارِ»

«Whoever frees a Muslim slave, Allah will save all the parts of his body from the (hell) fire as he has freed the body parts of the slave.»

Sa‘eed ibn Marjânah said that he narrated this hadith to ‘Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn, who then freed his slave, even though ‘Abdullâh ibn Ja‘far had offered him ten thousand dirhams, or one thousand dinars, for that slave. (Bukhari)

Abu Hurayrah also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من أَعْتَقَ شِقْصًا له في عَبْدٍ أُعْتِقَ كُلُّهُ إن كان له مَالٌ وَإِلَّا يستسعى غير مَشْقُوقٍ عليه»

«Whoever frees his portion of a jointly-owned slave should free the slave completely by paying the rest of his price if he has enough money; otherwise, the price of the slave is to be estimated, and the slave should be helped to work, without hardship, until he can pay the rest of his price.» (Bukhari)

Islam also specified the freeing of slaves as the expiation for many sins.

Yet the best system Islam legislated was to give the slaves control over their own passage into the world of the free, by allowing them to purchase their own freedom with the help of the community members whom Allah ordered to support their cause. Allah (□) says:

﴿ ... وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبۡتَغُونَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُكُمۡ فَكَاتِبُوهُمۡ إِنۡ عَلِمۡتُمۡ فِيهِمۡ خَيۡرٗاۖ وَءَاتُوهُم مِّن مَّالِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِيٓ ءَاتَىٰكُمۡۚ ... ٣٣ ﴾ (سورة النور: ٣٣)

﴿…And those who seek a contract [for eventual emancipation] from among whom your right hands possess – then make a contract with them if you know there is within them goodness and give them from the wealth of Allah which He has given you...﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 33)*

This was beneficial for the slaves who had to be weaned from depending on their masters for provisions, for they would have faced problems if they were suddenly required to provide their own food, clothes, and shelter. (We must not underestimate the potential impact on the stability and security of the society if it had been mandated that all the slaves be immediately freed.) Of course, it was also beneficial for the masters, who were, to a great extent, dependent on the slaves for their businesses.

This was also favorable for the community, for they would see responsible people, who knew the value of work and labor, moving from the ranks of the slaves to those of the free.

It is worth noting that the Prophet (ﷺ) led by example. According to the books of *seerah* (the Prophet's noble history), he emancipated all the slaves he had before Islam was revealed to him, as well as those given to him after Islam. In the most authentic book of Hadith, 'Amr ibn al-Ḥârith (□), the brother of the Mother of Believers, Juwayriyah (□), reported from her that when he died, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) left neither a dinar nor a dirham, neither a male nor a female slave, nor anything else except his white riding mule, his weapons, and the land which he had given in charity to wayfarers. (Bukhari: Book 1, Hadith 475)

Finally, in attestation to the Islamic plan for eliminating slavery, C. Snouck Hurgronje writes:

Setting slaves free is one of the most meritorious pious works, and, at the same time, the regular atonement for certain transgressions of the sacred law. So, according to Mohammedan principles, slavery is an institution destined to disappear.[349]

## Islam's Enjoinment of the Excellent Treatment of the Slaves

The excellent treatment of slaves in Islam is a fact that I will try to highlight by proofs from the textual and historical accounts, including testimonies by non-Muslim historians and thinkers.

In the Qur'an, there are several verses commanding the good treatment of slaves, including:

﴿ ۞ وَٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشۡرِكُواْ بِهِۦ شَيۡـٔٗاۖ وَبِٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ إِحۡسَٰنٗا وَبِذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلۡجَارِ ذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ وَٱلۡجَارِ ٱلۡجُنُبِ وَٱلصَّاحِبِ بِٱلۡجَنۢبِ وَٱبۡنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُكُمۡۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخۡتَالٗا فَخُورًا ٣٦ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ٣٦)

﴿Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 36)*

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) repeatedly commanded people to treat the slaves with mercy and compassion. One of his last recommendations to the Muslims before he died was to fear Allah regarding their slaves. A quick

review of the following hadiths will further testify to his instructions regarding the excellent treatment of slaves:

«لاَ يَقُولَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ عَبْدِي وَأَمَتِي ... فَإِنَّكُمُ المَمْلُوكُونَ وَالرَّبُّ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

«None of you should say: My slave (*'abdi*) or: My slave woman – for you are all (Allah's) slaves, and the Lord is Allah, Most High.» (A sound hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood)

Al-Ma'roor ibn Suwayd narrated:

«I saw Abu Dharr al-Ghifâri wearing a cloak, and his slave was wearing a cloak (like it). We asked him about that.

He replied: Once I abused a man, and he complained of me to the Prophet (ﷺ).

The Prophet (ﷺ) asked me:

«يا أَبَا ذَرٍّ أَعَيَّرْتَهُ بِأُمِّهِ إِنَّكَ امْرُؤٌ فِيكَ جَاهِلِيَّةٌ إِخْوَانُكُمْ خَوَلُكُمْ جَعَلَهُمْ اللهُ تَحْتَ أَيْدِيكُمْ فَمَنْ كان أَخُوهُ تَحْتَ يَدِهِ فَلْيُطْعِمْهُ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ وَلْيُلْبِسْهُ مِمَّا يَلْبَسُ ولا تُكَلِّفُوهُمْ ما يَغْلِبُهُمْ فَإِنْ كَلَّفْتُمُوهُمْ فَأَعِينُوهُمْ»

O Abu Dharr! Did you abuse him by slighting his mother? You are a man who has *jâhiliyah* (pre-Islamic ignorance and disbelief).

(He added:) Your slaves are your brethren, upon whom Allah has given you authority. If you have your brethren under your control, you should feed them with the like of what you eat and clothe them with the like of what you wear. You should not overburden them with what they cannot bear, and if you do so, help them (in their hard job).» (Bukhari 3:46:721)

The Prophet (ﷺ) unequivocally prohibited the separation of a mother from her slave child. Abu Moosâ reported that he said:

«لَعَنَ رسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ من فَرَّقَ بين الْوَالِدَةِ وَوَلَدِهَا وَبَيْنَ الْأَخِ وَبَيْنَ أَخِيهِ»

«May he be cursed, he who separates a mother from her child, or a brother from his sibling.» (A weak hadith recorded by Tirmidhi)

And for one who humiliates his slave by beating him or slapping him, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من لَطَمَ مَمْلُوكَهُ أو ضَرَبَهُ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ أَنْ يُعْتِقَهُ»

«He who slaps his slave or beats him, there is no expiation for this but to free him.» (Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was always concerned about the wellbeing of the slaves, and he would always mention them at the times when he expected the greatest attention from his audience, such as the time of his death and during the Farewell Pilgrimage, where he had the largest audience in his lifetime. "As for your slaves, male and female," he exhorted them during the Farewell Pilgrimage, "feed them with what you eat yourself and clothe them with what you wear. If you cannot keep them or they commit any fault, discharge them. They are God's people like unto you and be kind unto them."[350]

No other nation or religious group in the world treated slaves better than the Muslims did, as demonstrated by the aforementioned examples of instructions from Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). The following are the testimonies of non-Muslim historians and leaders regarding this very fact:

On the attitude of the Muslim master towards his slaves, American historian and philosopher Will Durant writes:

> …he handled them with a genial humanity that made their lot no worse – perhaps better, as more secure – than that of a factory worker in nineteenth-century Europe… It is astonishing how many sons of slaves rose to high place in the intellectual and political world of Islam, how many, like Mahmud and the early Mameluks, became kings.[351]

At the end of the eighteenth century, Mouradgea d'Ohsson (an Armenian historian and diplomat who wrote extensively about the Ottoman Empire) declared:

> There is perhaps no nation where the captives, the slaves, the very toilers in the galleys are better provided for or treated with more kindness than among the Muhammedans.[352]

Napoleon Bonaparte, a military leader who was Emperor of France from 1804 to 1814, is recorded as saying about the condition of slaves in Muslim countries:

> In the East, slavery never had the same characteristics as in the West. The slavery of the East is that which is seen in the Holy Scripture: the slave inherits from his master and marries his daughter. Most of the Pashas had been slaves; a great number of grand viziers, all the Mamluks, Ali Bey al-Kabir, and Murad Bey had all been slaves. They started by performing the most menial services in the house of their master and subsequently rose in status because of their merit or through favours. In the West, on the other hand, the slave was always below the domestic servant; he occupied the lowest rank...[353]

With regard to the question of concubines and having sex with the slave girls, we must first say that the Prophet (ﷺ) encouraged the masters to free their female slaves and marry them. He said:

«وَرَجُلٌ كانت له أَمَةٌ فَغَذَّاهَا فَأَحْسَنَ غِذَاءَهَا ثُمَّ أَدَّبَهَا فَأَحْسَنَ أَدَبَهَا ثُمَّ أَعْتَقَهَا وَتَزَوَّجَهَا فَلَهُ أَجْرَان»

«He will be doubly rewarded… the man who had a slave girl, and he fed her well, taught her manners and educated her, and then freed her and married her.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Secondly, this system was not new, nor was it introduced by Islam; all the prophets before Islam acknowledged it and used it. There is no

argument among the Jews, Christians, and Muslims that Hâjar was the concubine of Prophet Ibrâheem, and the Old Testament contains countless stories about concubines, including those of the Prophets Dâwood and Sulaymân (peace and blessings be upon them).

We can never view sexual relations with a female slave nowadays from the same perspective of those who lived during those times. It is illogical to deal with historical matters without understanding their context; judging a practice as good or bad cannot be done in the abstract, separate from its context and the norms of the time. Prostitution refers to sex outside of the socially acceptable context, but in ancient times, the concubine (like the wife) was allowed to have sex with the master as a legitimate partner. No woman would ever be allowed to have two sexual partners at the same time, so this concubine was not a sex tool to be enjoyed by the master and his relatives and friends. She could be wed to only one person, and her rights, along with the rights of her children, were guaranteed. Ultimately, sex with the female slave provided a way to fulfill her needs, and she also gained a special status once she delivered a child, who had the same rights as the master's other children. After bearing his child, she could not be sold and was freed upon the death of the master.

I would conclude by emphasizing that Islam was keen on the emancipation of slaves, and it enjoined this throughout its teachings. The original and natural state in which God created his servants is the state of freedom, and He desires a return to that freedom. Let us all pray for the deliverance of all people from all forms of disguised slavery that exist in our world today and for the end of all manifestations of subjugation of people by others.

# Glossary of Islamic Terms[354]

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| *abu* (or *abi*) | أبو، أبي | father (of) |
| *adhân* | أَذَان | the call to prayer |
| *Anṣâr* | أَنْصار | ‘helpers’: the Muslim citizens of Madinah who gave refuge to the Prophet (ﷺ) and the other Muslim emigrants from Makkah |
| ‘Arafah (pl. *‘Arafât*) | عَرَفَة، عَرَفَات | the plain outside Makkah where pilgrims gather at the climax of the Hajj; it is actually made up of a chain of hills, so the plural form is sometimes used |
| *‘Âshoorâ’* | عَاشُوراء | the tenth day of the Islamic month of Muḥarram; it is recommended that Muslims fast on this day to commemorate the victory of Prophet Moosâ (□) over the Pharaoh |
| *‘aṣr* | عَصْر | mid-afternoon; the obligatory prayer at that time |

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| *banu* (or *bani*) | بَنُو ، بَنِي | *lit.* ‘children (of)’; *usu.* referring to a tribe that claims a common ancestor |
| *barzakh* | بَرْزَخ | *lit*. barrier; *usu.* used with reference to life after death, but before the Day of Judgement, namely in the grave. |
| *dhikr Allâh* | ذِكْر الله | remembrance of Allah; specifically, remembering Allah through praising and supplicating to Him |
| dinar (*deenâr*) | دِينار | originally, a gold coin; a unit of currency |
| dirham | دِرْهَم | originally, a silver coin; a unit of currency |
| *fiṭrah* | فِطْرَة | the natural inclination (of humans) instilled by Allah |
| Hadith (*Ḥadeeth*) | حَدِيث | the collected statements and actions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that with the Qur’an form the basis of Islamic law |
| hadith (*ḥadeeth*) | حَدِيث | a statement or action of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that was remembered and recorded by his Companions and followers |
| *al-Ḥâfi<u>dh</u>* | الحَافِظ | ‘the one who has memorized (the Qur’an)’; an honorific title |
| Hajj (*Ḥajj*) | حَجّ | the major pilgrimage to the Sacred Mosque, site of the Kaaba in Makkah, to be undertaken by |

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| | | every able Muslim once in his or her lifetime |
| *ḥayâ'* | الحَيَاء | modesty, bashfulness, shyness, moral conscience and self-respect |
| *iḥsân* | إِحْسَان | goodness, perfection, excellence; to worship Allah as if you see Him knowing that even if you do not see Him, He sees you |
| *in shâ' Allâh* | إِنْ شَاء الله | God willing |
| Jibreel | جِبْرِيل | the Arabic name for Gabriel (□), the archangel who transmitted the verses of the Qur'an and other communications from Allah (□) to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) |
| jihad (*jihâd*) | جِهَاد | struggle or striving (in Allah's cause) |
| jinn (plural of *jinni*) | جِنّ | non-human, rational beings created by Allah from fire, often referred to as 'demons' or 'devils'. They have free will like humans: some are Muslims, others disbelievers; some are obedient to Allah, others disobedient. Satan is a jinni. Some disobedient jinn mislead people into thinking that they can foretell the future, near or distant, or provide people with riches or some sort of power. |
| Kaaba (*Ka'bah*) | الْكَعْبَة | the House of Allah in Makkah, originally built by Prophets Ibrâheem and Ismâ'eel, which |

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| | | Muslims face when they pray |
| *lâ ilâha illâ Allâh* | لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ | the Islamic testimony of faith: 'there is none worthy of worship other than Allah' |
| *marfoo'* | مَرْفُوع | *lit.* 'elevated': a category of hadith that is traceable up to the Prophet (ﷺ) where the Companion narrates, 'Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said…' |
| *matrook* | مَتْرُوك | *lit.* 'abandoned', meaning 'rejected': a term used by Hadith scholars to describe |
| | | someone considered to be an unreliable narrator |
| *mawqoof* | مَوْقُوف | *lit.* 'restricted': a category of hadith that refers to sayings or actions of the Companions, as opposed to those of the Prophet (ﷺ) |
| *mu'allaq* | مُعَلَّق | a category of hadith: a narration whose chain is not connected to the Prophet (ﷺ) |
| *mu'ḍal* | مُعْضَل | unauthentic; a *mu'ḍal* hadith is one wherein its chain is missing two or more narrators |
| *mudallis* | مُدَلِّس | a narrator who was known to practice any form of deception, whether innocent or otherwise, when relating a narration |
| *munkar* | مُنْكَر | a category of hadith: a narration that is related by only one narrator, who is neither upright nor |

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| | | precise; technically, it is a weak hadith that contradicts an authentic hadith |
| *mursal* | مُرْسَل | a category of hadith: a narration that a *tâbi'i* ascribes to the Prophet (ﷺ) without mentioning the Companion from whom he or she heard it |
| *qadar* | الْقَدَر | divine predestination; destiny; power; exact measure |
| qibla (*qiblah*) | الْقِبْلَة | the bearing from any point on Earth to the Kaaba; the direction that all Muslims must face in prayer |
| Ramadan (*Ramaḍân*) | رَمَضَان | the ninth month in the Islamic calendar; the month of obligatory fasting and the month in which the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed |
| *ribâ* | رِبَا | usury; charging interest on debt |
| *salaf* | السَّلَف | the pious predecessors: the earliest generations of the righteous followers of Islam |
| *shahâdah* | الشَّهَادَة | testimony, *esp.* the Islamic testimony of faith: *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh, Muḥammadun rasool Ullâh* (There is none worthy of worship other than God [Allah], and Muhammad is the Messenger of God) |
| Sharia (*Sharee'ah*) | شَرِيعَة | Islamic law derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah |

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| *shaykh* | شَيْخ | teacher; mentor; scholar |
| *soorah* or *soorat* | سُورة | chapter of the Qur‘an |
| *subḥân Allâh* | سُبْحان الله | glory be to Allah |
| *Sunnah* | سُنَّة | the practice and collected sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that together with the Qur’an forms the basis of Islamic law |
| *tâbi‘een* (sg. *tâbi‘i*) | التَّابِعون | ‘successors’; those who knew or met any of the Companions and transmitted hadiths from them |
| *takbeer* | تَكْبِير | the act of saying *Allâhu akbar* (Allah is the Greatest) |
| *taqwâ* | التَّقْوَى | fearful awareness of Allah; being mindful of Allah; pious dedication; being careful not to transgress the bounds set by Allah |
| *tasbeeḥ* | تَسْبِيح | the recitation of phrases glorifying Allah; saying *subḥân Allah* (glory be to Allah) |
| Ummah | أُمَّة | community or nation: *usu*. used to refer to the entire global community of Muslims |
| *witr* | وِتْر | *lit.* ‘an odd number’: a single unit of supererogatory prayer that is prayed any time |

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| | | after the evening (*'ishâ'*) prayer and before the call for the dawn prayer |
| zakat (*zakât*) | زَكَاة | obligatory charity: an 'alms tax' on wealth that is paid by Muslims and be distributed to others who qualify as recipients |

# Notes

[1] Here it refers to excessive adoration of someone (or something) other than Allah. It includes being obsessed with an image of that person. (Editor)

[2] Abu Zayd, *Ibn al-Qayyim*, 246.

Shaykh ʻAbd adh-Dhâhir Abu as-Samḥ (died 1370 AH), originally Egyptian, was the imam and speaker of al-Masjid al-Ḥarâm in Makkah. He mentions in the conclusion (p. 334) of the print he supervised (1346 AH), that this book by the esteemed Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd was the means through which Allah guided him to the way of the righteous predecessors and enabled him to adopt their methodology in monotheism and worship.

[3] ʻAbdur-Raḥmân, *Dhakhâ'ir at-Turâth*, 1:224.

[4] Abu Zayd, *Ibn al-Qayyim*, 244-245.

[5] Nadwi and Nadwi, *Rijâl al-Fikr*.

[6] Wherever possible, Arabic terms have been translated into English. In cases where we have chosen to retain the Arabic, the transliterated word or phrase is shown in italics the first time it appears in the text. The term is also defined in the glossary found at the end of this book. (Editor)

[7] This statement alludes to an authentic hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ), with this wording. It was narrated by Abu Hurayrah and recorded by Muslim in his authentic collection.

[8] All hadiths in this text have been checked and verified by IIPH's researchers. It is rare, but it does happen that a hadith is not verifiable within the timeframe of researching and editing the book. In that case, a decision is made by the editorial board whether or not to include the hadith. It is IIPH's policy not to include weak hadiths or fabricated (fake) hadiths in our publications. If a weak hadith is included in any text, it is usually because the author of the book discusses it as a weak hadith. (Editor)

[9] This hadith was also narrated by ‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ood.

[10] The translations of the meanings of the verses of the Qur’an in this book are taken (with some changes to the text) from *The Majestic Qur’an* translated by Nasiruddin al-Khattab, under publication with IIPH. (Editor)

[11] This alludes to the entire Soorat al-Fâtiḥah. It was customary for the Prophet (ﷺ), his Companions, and the scholars after them to refer to a chapter of the Qur’an by its first few words.

[12] *Ruqâ* is the plural of *ruqyah*, which most commonly refers to remedying someone through spoken incantations. (Translator)

[13] *Ta‘weedh* are the verses and statements of remembrance that involve *isti‘âdhah* (seeking refuge) with Allah, such as Soorat al-Falaq (113) and Soorat an-Nâs (114). (Translator)

[14] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 1:176. Mâlik ibn Deenâr recorded this with similar wording.

[15] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:77.

It means a simple supplication carries great weight when coming from a righteous person just like a little salt is enough to flavour an entire dish.

[16] In the main text, the author Ibn al-Qayyim uses the term ‘our Shaykh’ to refer to his teacher Ibn Taymiyah. (Editor)

[17] A supporting hadith was recorded by at-Tirmidhi, aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi, al-Quḍâ‘i, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni. Its chain contains Abu Mawdood who is weak. The two hadiths together strengthen the report, Allah willing.

[18] Ibn Ḥajar indicates that this only came through Yoosuf ibn as-Sifr ibn al-Awzâ‘i who is *matrook* (discarded), and that perhaps Baqiyah plagiarized it! Ibn Ḥajar, *at-Talkheeṣ al-Ḥabeer*, 2:95.

[19] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:273; Abu Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ’*, 2:235.

[20] Al-Mannân is one of the beautiful names of Allah, which means the One Who envelopes His slaves in an ocean of blessings with no shore. (Translator)

[21] Dhun-Noon, literally ‘the man of the fish or the whale’ is the title given to Prophet Yoonus (Jonah) who was swallowed by a whale, but later cast upon the shore after his supplication to Allah to save him. See *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 139-148).* (Editor)

[22] Tasbeeḥ, or exaltation, is the act of saying *Subḥân Allâh* or something to that effect. *Subḥân Allâh* means ‘exalted is Allah (above any imperfection)’. (Translator)

[23] Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, *al-Mujâbeen fid-Du‘â’*, no. 24. The chain of this narration is weak.

[24] The ignorant assume that the secret was the grave. From here came many mistakes by historians and biographers. We find that after writing the biographies of some scholars and righteous folk, they claimed that a supplication at the person's grave is accepted.

[25] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 52. This resembles the narrations from the Children of Israel.

[26] These are all forbidden practices. In fact this may, at times, amount to greater polytheism (removing one from Islam), and we seek refuge with Allah from it.

[27] These texts are backbreaking for the innovators who (wrongfully) declare people disbelievers; the only escape they find from such forms of evidence is to reject, deny, misinterpret, and distort them.

[28] The translation of these verses is taken from Saheeh International. (Editor)

[29] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 347.

[30] Ibn al-Jawzi, *Ṣifat aṣ-Ṣafwah*, 3:233. (Editor)

[31] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, no. 259.

[32] Al-Baqee' graveyard is in Madinah, southeast of al-Masjid an-Nabawi (the Mosque of the Prophet [ﷺ]). (Editor)

[33] To 'eat the flesh of people' means backbiting other people. Those who backbite are as though they are 'eating their flesh'. See *(al-Ḥujurât 49: 12).* (Editor)

[34] 'Illiyeen is one of the names of paradise. It comes from the word *'aliy* which means to be elevated to a high place. 'Illiyeen is the heights of paradise. (Translator)

[35] Sijjeen is one of the names of the hellfire. It comes from the verb *sijn* which means to imprison. Sijjeen is a permanent prison and a place of severe punishment in the hereafter. (Translator)

[36] Its abridged form was recorded by an-Nasâ'i and Ibn Mâjah. It was authenticated by Ibn al-Qayyim. Ibn al-Qayyim, *Tahdheeb Sunan Abi Dâwood*; al-Albâni, *Aḥkâm al-Janâ'iz*, 156-160.

[37] Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'.*

[38] The blower of the trumpet (or horn) means Angel Isrâfeel who will blow the trumpet to signal the start of the Day of Resurrection. See *(an-Naml 27: 87); (az-Zumar 39: 68); (Qâf 50: 20).* (Editor)

[39] This was also narrated by Ibn 'Amr and Asmâ'.

[40] The version recorded by Ibn Ḥibbân and al-Ḥâkim is weak due to Abu Ḥareez. Al-Haythami states after attributing it to Abu Ya'lâ, "The narrators of Aḥmad and Abu Ya'lâ are trustworthy." al-Haythami, *Majma' az-Zawâ'id*, 5:74.

[41] The Book of Records is where the individual's life is recorded in detail ready for the Day of Judgement. The successful will receive it in their right hand and the unsuccessful will receive it in their left hand or behind their backs. (Editor)

[42] In Hadith terminology, mawqoof is a technical term indicating that the wording is correctly attributed to the Companion, even if he or she could have only known this information through the Prophet (ﷺ). (Translator)

[43] As-Sa'dân is a plant that was commonly known in their locality. (Translator)

[44] Taqi ad-Deen Aḥmad ibn Taymiyah (1263-1328 CE) was an Islamic scholar, theologian, and logician. He was Ibn al-Qayyim's teacher. (Editor)

[45] Taken from a hadith recorded by Muslim.

[46] Abu Nu'aym also gives an authentic mawqoof transmission of this from Ṭâriq ibn Shihâb, from Salmân al-Fârisi himself. Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 1:203.

[47] That is, they would become one community of disbelievers who assumed that Allah's generosity to them was a sign of His approval.

[48] This is the wording of Muslim:

«The Prophet (ﷺ) said: By Allah, compared to the hereafter, this world is just like when you dip your finger in the sea – and he pointed with his index finger. See how much (water comes out on your finger).»

[49] Ibn al-Qayyim, *at-Tibyân*, 109.

[50] Ibn al-Qayyim, *at-Tibyân*, 183.

[51] It is mentioned in the Qur'an *(al-Baqarah 2: 260).* See also as-Suyooṭi, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 6:334.

[52] There is another chain for it from 'Â'ishah, which was also reported by aṭ-Ṭabari, so this strengthens it. It is also strengthened by the hadith of Abu Hurayrah.

[53] ﴿And those who join that which Allah has ordered to be joined and fear their Lord and are afraid of the evil of [their] account.﴾ *(ar-Ra'd 13: 21)*

[54] ﴿Then do you feel secure that [instead] He will not cause a part of the land to swallow you or send against you a storm of stones? Then you would not find for yourselves an advocate.﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 68)*

[55] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:13.

[56] Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*; Abu Ya'lâ, *Musnad*, no. 5; Ibn Abi Shaybah, *Kitâb al-Muṣannaf*, 9:66; Ibn al-Mubârak, *az-Zuhd*, no. 369. Recorded with an authentic chain of narration.

Ibn as-Sunni, *'Amâl al-Yawm wal-Laylah*, no. 7; Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, *aṣ-Ṣamt*, no. 13; Mâlik ibn Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, 2:988.

57 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:13.

58 as-Suyooṭi, *Târeekh al-Khulafâ'*, no. 104.

59 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:15.

60 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:16.

61 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:17.

62 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:81.

63 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:29, 30, 34; Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 1:51-52.

64 at-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, no. 2424; Ibn Mâjah, *Sunan*, no. 4267; Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 1:61.

65 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:42; Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 1:60.

66 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:48; Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 1:76.

67 The remainder of the forthcoming anecdotes are recorded by Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, or Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, so their reference will no longer be stated.

68 Here 'our Shaykh' refers to Shaykh al-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah, may Allah have mercy upon him.

69 The great flood that drowned the transgressors during the time of Prophet Nooḥ. See *(Hood 11: 36-44)* and *(al-Qamar 54: 9-16).* (Editor)

70 The 'Âd were the people of Prophet Hood. They arrogantly built tall, ornate buildings and monuments to show off their skill and power. See *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 123-140)*, *(al-Qamar 54: 18-21)*, and *(al-Ḥâqqah 69: 6-8).* (Editor)

71 Prophet Ṣâliḥ was sent to the wicked Thamood whom Allah destroyed because they hamstrung the she-camel He had sent, as they did not want it to use their water. See *(Hood 11: 61-68)*, *(adh-Dhâriyât 51: 43-45)*, and *(al-Qamar 54: 23-31).* (Editor)

72 Prophet Shu'ayb was sent to the people of Madyan (Midian) who were destroyed for giving short measure and weight in transactions. See *(al-A'râf 7: 85-93)*, *(Hood 11: 84-95)*, and *(al-'Ankaboot 29: 36-37).* (Editor)

73 Fir'awn (Pharaoh) was the arrogant, tyrannical ruler of Egypt who enslaved the Children of Israel during the time of Prophet Moosâ. For the passage on drowning, see *(al-Baqarah 2: 50)* and *(Yoonus 10: 90-99)*. (Editor)

[74] Qâroon (Korah) was an extremely wealthy man who was arrogant and boasted about his wealth. See *(al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 76-82)*. (Editor)

[75] The people mentioned in Soorat Yâ Seen refused to listen to the three Messengers sent to them by Allah. See *(Yâ Seen 36: 13-32)*. (Editor)

[76] See *(al-Isrâ' 17: 5-7)*.

[77] See *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 60)*.

[78] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 1:86. This has an authentic chain of narration.

This narration is a golden principle, one whose understanding resolves an issue faced by many preachers of our time – and this is the issue of bringing about change. Look (may Allah safeguard you) at their understanding (may Allah have mercy upon them) of the issue of bringing change and how it is built upon abiding by the commands of Allah, the Majestic.

[79] Al-Ḥâfidh al-'Irâqi states:

> It was recorded by Abu 'Amr ad-Dâni, *as-Sunan al-Wâridah fil-Fitan*, from al-Ḥasan with a *mursal* chain. It was also recorded by ad-Daylami, *Musnad al-Firdaws*, from 'Ali and Ibn 'Umar with the wording:
>
> «…as long as its pious do not revere their corrupt and its virtuous compromise with its evildoers.»
>
> The chains of both narrations are weak.

al-'Irâqi, *Takhreej al-Iḥyâ'*, 2:150.

[80] Recorded by Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, al-Bayhaqi, and Ibn Adiy in a marfoo' report from 'Ali but its chain is weak and disconnected. Al-Bayhaqi, *Shu'ab al-Eemân*, no. 1763; Ibn Adiy, *al-Kâmil*. It was graded by Bukhari as a *mu'allaq* (suspended) report with a mawqoof chain. Bukhari, *Khalq Af'âl al-'Ibâd*, no. 239.

[81] Recorded by Abu Ya'lâ with a mawqoof chain which contains Shareek who has a poor memory. Abu Ya'lâ, *Musnad*, no. 4981. There is another report by aṭ-Ṭabarâni but the chain contains Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyâ al-Aḥwal who is weak. aṭ-Ṭabarâni, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer*, no. 10329. There is also a marfoo' report; see its grade in al-Albâni, *Ghâyat al-Marâm*, no. 344.

[82] al-Baṣri, *Marâseel al-Ḥasan*; Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, *Kitâb al-'Ilm*; as-Suyooṭi, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 6:66.

[83] I found that Abu 'Ubaydah did not hear from his father.

[84] Recorded by Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ. This report is from the narrations of the Children of Israel and its problem is clear. It was also recorded by al-Bayhaqi but it was from al-Waḍeen ibn 'Aṭâ'. al-Bayhaqi, *Shu'ab al-Eemân*, no. 9428.

[85] These are all reported with broken chains of narration. Al-Bayhaqi also recorded it from Mâlik ibn Deenâr with a *mu'ḍal* chain then indicated that this is the confirmed report. al-'Irâqi, *Takhreej al-Iḥyâ'*, 2:310; al-Haythami, *Majma' az-Zawâ'id*, 7:270.

Translator: A mu'ḍal hadith is one in which two or more narrators are missing from the chain.

[86] Al-Munajjid mentions a book titled *Maqtal 'Umar* in *Mu'jam al-Muṣannafât Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ*, no. 177.

See the introduction to the book printed by Dâr al-Gharb: Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, *aṣ-Ṣamt*, 106.

[87] Even after reviewing the Hadith records of Shaykh al-Albâni, this hadith could not be found – and Allah knows best.

[88] al-'Eenah is one of the various forms of interest-based loans, where the interest is supposedly avoided by masking it in the form of a sale. Basically, the first party sells a product for a lower price, and agrees to purchase it again from the second party in the future for a higher price. (Translator)

«hold firmly onto the tails of cattle» means that they stick to looking after their cattle and farms instead of striving in the way of Allah. (Editor)

[89] Nebuchadnezzar was a powerful king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Dânyâl (Daniel) was a prophet during his reign. (Editor)

[90] Ibn Ḥibbân, *al-Majrooḥeen*, 3:76; aṭ-Ṭabarâni, *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*, no. 2611; Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 2:377.

[91] al-Baṣri, *Marâseel al-Ḥasan*; Aḥmad, *Musnad*; Abu Dâwood, *al-Marâseel*; al-Mundhiri, *at-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb*, 3:382. It is not found in al-Mundhiri's printed edition. It was also recorded in ad-Daylami's *Kitâb Firdaws al-Akhbâr* from Mihrân as stated in *Jam' al-Jawâmi'*, no. 14595. Our Shaykh (al-Albâni) mentions it in *Ḍa'eef al-Jâmi'*, no. 343.

[92] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, no. 277.

[93] Ibn Katheer states that it is obviously mu'ḍal. Ibn Katheer, *Târeekh*, 13:81.

[94] This hadith was not found from Sa'eed, from Ibn 'Abbâs, in any of the three *Mu'jam* collections of aṭ-Ṭabarâni. Aṭ-Ṭabarâni recorded it from Ibn 'Abbâs with a similar wording in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* but from Mujâhid and Ṭâwoos.

[95] No chain was found for this hadith, indicating its weakness.

[96] Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 1:180.

97 Another version by Aḥmad and by aṭ-Ṭabarâni has an authentic chain of narration. See al-Haythami, *Majma‘ az-Zawâ’id*, 10:190.

98 Abu Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ’*, 1:279.

99 Likewise, innovation is the door to misguidance.

100 Abu Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ’*, 1:324.

101 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, no. 460. Its chain contains much discrepancy.

102 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, no. 52.

103 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, no. 165.

104 Abu Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ’*, 1:215.

105 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:282; Abu Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ’*, 2:271.

106 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:56.

107 ash-Shâfi‘i, *Deewân al-Imâm ash-Shâfi‘i*, no. 54; al-Hindi, *al-Fawâ’id al-Bahiyah*, no. 223; as-Safâreeni, *Sharḥ Thulâthiyât al-Musnad*, 1:769.

108 Compare this with: Abu Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ’*, 8:109.

109 A statement with similar wording is attributed to Ibrâheem ibn Ad-ham, not Ibn ‘Abbâs. It was recorded by al-Bayhaqi in *Shu‘ab al-Eemân*, no. 6828.

110 …and today it is the opposite!

111 Al-Ḥasan ibn Hâni’ is Abu Nuwâs (died 198 AH). His biography is found in al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, *Târeekh Baghdâd*, 7:436. Here is some of his famous poetry on the same topic:

> *Stop blaming me, for blame is a tempting tease,*
> *And treat me with that which itself caused the disease.*

112 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 2:180.

113 Being the source of all power and honour, Allah grants them to whom He wills.

114 It was narrated about him by ‘Abd ibn Ḥumayd. As-Suyooṭi, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 8:447.

115 What the author mentions here are all based on authentic hadiths, most of which are in Bukhari and Muslim, or either of them. Whatever is weak is pointed out. Were it not for the fear of repetition, everything would have been referenced. Dr. Bâsim Fayṣal al-Jawâbirah’s book titled *Marwiyât al-La‘n fis-Sunnah al-Muṭahharah* is a comprehensive work that has been published (on this).

116 A *muḥallil* is the man who temporarily marries an irrevocably divorced woman so that she can once again become halal (lawful) for her original husband and remarry him. (Translator)

117 The word ‘lanterns’ is a weak addition to the related hadith, as was verified in greater detail by Shaykh al-Albâni, so review it in *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aḍ-Ḍa‘eefah*, no. 225.

118 The word ‘intermediary’ was recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarâni, and al-Ḥâkim, from Thawbân. The chain of the related hadith contains both a weak and an unknown narrator.

As for the payer and consumer of bribes being cursed, the hadith regarding this has been confirmed to be authentic. al-Albâni, *Irwâ’ al-Ghaleel*, no. 2620.

119 ‘Pure white’ refers to the river of milk.

120 as-Suyooṭi, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 6:496-497.

121 Aḥmad recorded it with similar wording. Aḥmad, *Musnad*, 2:296. The reporter of this incident was Abu Qaḥdham and according to adh-Dhahabi, he is weak. Adh-Dhahabi, *Meezân al-I‘tidâl*, 4:564; al-Haythami, *Majma‘ az-Zawâ’id*, 5:197.

122 One of His slaves refers to al-Mahdi. The hadiths about him are authentic regardless of what some of the ignorant think – those who stubbornly ignore the evidence and those who reject the truth despite its proofs.

123 This was reported by an-Nawwâs ibn Sam‘ân and recorded by Muslim.

124 Qadar means that this is what Allah has destined for a person.

Shaykh al-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah has a treatise *al-Iḥtijâj bil-Qadar* which refutes those who constantly justify or excuse themselves on the basis of qadar. In this book, he clarifies the correct position on it.

125 Beautiful here refers to beautiful character, manner, and behaviour and not simply physical beauty or attractiveness. (Editor)

126 *Witr* refers to odd, as in the opposite of even. Regarding Allah, Witr refers to Him being One, without being matched by any partners or equals.

127 All these qualities were mentioned in authentic hadiths of the Prophet (ﷺ).

128 ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Three types of people will not enter paradise and Allah will not look at them on the Day of Resurrection: those who are cruel to their parents, mannish women who imitate men, and the dayyooth.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥâkim, an-Nasâ’i, and al-Bayhaqi with a good chain of narration)

A dayyooth is a man who has no protective jealousy whatsoever, like a pimp or one who is complacent about the promiscuity of his women. (Translator)

129 al-Hirawi, *Ghareeb al-Ḥadeeth*, 3:31; az-Zamakhshari, *al-Fâ'iq fee Ghareeb al-Ḥadeeth*, 1:316; Ibn al-Atheer, *an-Nihâyah*, 1:311.

130 This narration was not found in the *Masâ'il* that were printed in his name: Ibn Hâni al-Andalusi al-Azdi, *Masâ'il Ibn Hâni.*

131 See *(an-Nisâ' 4: 88).*

132 See *(al-A'râf 7: 101).*

133 See *(al-A'râf 7: 51).*

134 See *(ad-Dukhân 44: 49).*

135 Iḥsân is as defined in this authentic hadith:

«To worship Allah as though you see Him, and if you do not see Him, then He certainly sees you.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

136 The part «Beware, beware» was recorded by Muslim.

137 See *(al-Ḥadeed 57: 28).*

138 Seventeen times each day and night. This refers to the line of the obligatory prayer, which is repeated seventeen times each twenty-four hours:

﴿Guide us to the straight path.﴾ *(al-Fâtiḥah 1: 6)* (Editor)

139 Body here refers to using the body for helping others, or through some good or brave action. (Editor)

140 This is what the Messenger (ﷺ) used to seek refuge from.

141 Allah knows best about their authenticity.

142 al-Haythami mentioned that al-'Alâ' ibn Ziyâd did not hear from Mu'âdh. al-Haythami, *Majma' az-Zawâ'id*, 2:23. This narration can be dismissed, for we can suffice with the hadith narrated by Abu ad-Dardâ', where Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«Satan will overcome three (people alone) in a town or desert which has not established the prescribed daily prayers. Stick to the congregation, for the wolf only eats those which stray.» (A reliable hadith recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, an-Nasâ'i, Ibn Khuzaymah, and Ibn Ḥibbân)

143 See *(an-Nisâ' 4: 69)*. (Editor)

144 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 52. This resembles the narrations from the Children of Israel.

145 Compare with al-Albâni, *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, no. 15.

146 Ash-Shâm is the area that includes the current states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine. The six places in the Qur'an where it is described as blessed are: *(Yoonus 10: 93)*; *(al-A'râf 7: 137)*; *(al-Isrâ' 17: 1)*; *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 71)*; *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 81)*; *(Saba' 34: 18)*. (Editor)

147 See its source and explanation in the 49th case made for the superiority of knowledge in the following book: Ibn al-Qayyim, *Miftâḥ Dâr as-Sa'âdah*, 1:170.

148 al-Maqdisi, *al-Aḥâdeeth al-Mukhtârah* as per *al-Jâmi' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, no. 3019. Abu Nu'aym graded this as odd and according to al-Albâni, its chain of narration is weak.

149 Its numerous chains and narrations were gathered at the beginning of al-Ḥâfidh Ibn Rajab's treatise in his commentary.

150 The carnal self or the incessantly demanding self is what tempts with evil or it is a person's inclination towards vice. See *(Yoosuf 12: 53)*. (Translator)

151 The 'self at peace' or the reassured self is the one comforted with faith and thus its certainty evokes the person to perform good deeds. See *(al-Fajr 89: 27)*. (Translator)

152 This statement was confirmed in a hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah, and recorded by Muslim.

153 The Battle of Uḥud (23rd March, 625 CE) was fought at Mount Uḥud, near Madinah. Some Muslims disobeyed the Prophet (ﷺ) by leaving their posts on the battlefield to take some booty. Many were wounded and killed by the enemy, the people of Makkah. See *(Âl 'Imrân 3: 152-155)*. (Editor)

154 Pantheism is followed by the radical, deviant Sufis who claim that the Creator and created are one. Exalted is Allah, high above what the wrongdoers ascribe to Him.

155 Partial pantheism is another fabricated claim devised by Satan and adopted by the hearts of some Sufis who claim that, at certain moments, the Creator dwells in the created. Glorified is He above such blasphemy.

156 This is the merchandise of the bankrupt. It is measured by mass and multitude, even if this abundance in words is scarce in meaning. Students of knowledge and people of truth only see that the truth is brilliant and influential; they do not look at how few or many followers it has, for this is never the gauge to use.

157 Anthropomorphic means to consider something that is not human (for example, an animal or an object) as having human features, qualities, and behaviour. (Editor)

158 Indeed, only the ignorant and foolish are deceived by these statements. The sincere have come to know, or will soon come to know, that they must turn away from these pathetic rhetorical notions.

159 The advisor was Abu ‘Ali ad-Daqqâq (died 412 AH). His biography is found in *al-Bidâyah wan-Nihâyah*, 12:13. This quote of his is found in *ar-Risâlah al-Qushayriyah*, 57.

160 Adam’s first son Qâbeel (Cain) killed his younger brother Hâbeel (Abel) because a sacrifice from Hâbeel was accepted, but his sacrifice was not. See *(al-Mâ’idah 5: 27-32).* (Editor)

161 The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«When you see a fire, perform *takbeer* (say: *Allâhu akbar*), for the fire is extinguished with that.» (Recorded by Ibn as-Sunni and Ibn ‘Adiy).

It has a severely weak chain which includes al-‘Umari who is matrook.

162 This is part of a hadith narrated by Abu Sa‘eed al-Khudri. Its chain contains ‘Ali ibn Zayd ibn Jud‘ân whose memory was weak.

163 Some interpret the attributes of the Creator figuratively (meaning they alter the definition to suit their own interpretation). It is a blatant error to assume that this explanation is a form of figurative interpretation. This linguistic explanation of forgetfulness conforms with both the fundamentals of the Arabic language and the methodology of the salaf (in their understanding of Allah’s attributes).

164 The Day of Taghâbun is another name for the Day of Judgement. It comes from the word *ghabn*, which means to be cheated. (Translator)

165 The part «I am to give you glad tidings of what pleases you» is from one of the versions of the authentic hadith narrated by al-Barâ’ ibn ‘Âzib, which has been previously cited.

166 This is a mawqoof report from many Companions. Some of the chains are authentic. Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, 1:106.

167 as-Suyooṭi, *al-Ḥabâ’ik fee Akhbâr al-Malâ’ik*, 49 and 154.

168 Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbân and al-Bazzâr from Ibn ‘Umar; Ibn al-Mubârak recorded it from Abu Hurayrah. Ibn al-Mubârak, *az-Zuhd war-Raqâ’iq*. Al-Haythami states that he is hopeful that its chain is sound. Al-Haythami, *Majma‘ az-Zawâ’id*, 1:226. Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ al-Bâri*, 11:109.

169 A *maḥram* is anyone whom a person is permanently forbidden to marry either because of blood ties, breastfeeding, or marriage. (Translator)

170 Readers are advised to read further on the *fiqh* rulings related to these and other legislative punishments. (Editor)

171 See the detailed evidence for and rulings on these matters in the author’s book *I‘lâm al-Muwaqqi‘een*, 4:266-407.

172 *Ta'zeer* is a lesser discretionary punishment that a judge administers to discourage the repetition of a crime for which no *ḥadd* (prescribed punishment) has been legislated. (Translator)

173 Allah mentions:

﴿Do not kill your children for fear of poverty, for We will provide for them and for you. Verily, killing them is a grave sin.﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 31)*

174 Iḥrâm is the state of ritual consecration for Hajj or 'umrah. (Translator)

175 Dhihâr is the unlawful act of saying to one's spouse: "You are as impermissible for me (to enjoy intimately) as my mother" – and similar statements. (Translator)

176 Barzakh means a barrier. This term is most commonly used with reference to life after death but before the Day of Judgement, namely in the grave. (Translator)

177 A part of the famous 'sermon of necessity' which begins:

«All praise is for Allah. We praise him, we seek His aid, and we seek His forgiveness…»

As for the (common) addition: '…and we seek His forgiveness' – this is baseless (in the hadith), as Shaykh al-Albâni points out in *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 1:5.

178 ﴿Those [angels] who bear the Throne and those who are around it glorify and praise their Lord; they believe in Him and pray for forgiveness for those who believe [saying]: Our Lord, You encompass all things in Your mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who repent and follow Your path, and protect them from the punishment of the blazing fire. Our Lord, and admit them to gardens of perpetual abode which You have promised them, and [admit] the righteous among their forebears, their spouses and their offspring. Verily, You are the Almighty, the Most Wise. And protect them from the evil consequences [of their sins], for whomever You protect from evil consequences on that Day, You will indeed have bestowed mercy upon him, and that is the supreme triumph.﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 7-9)*

179 An authentic reported by Imam Aḥmad. See its referencing in the treatise: Ibn Taymiyah, *Ittibâ' ar-Rasool*; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Mawârid al-Amân*, 40.

180 For donkeys see *(al-Jumu'ah 62: 5)*; for dogs see *(al-A'râf 7: 176)*, and for livestock see *(al-Furqân 25: 44)*. (Editor)

181 Firâsah is a precise intuition gifted by Allah to those near to Him. The hadith states:

«Beware of the firâsah (insight) of the believers, for they see with the light of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.» (An odd hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi)

Though most scholars consider this hadith unauthentic, it defines firâsah. (Translator)

182 See *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 60)*.

183 This has been authenticated in a marfoo‘ report with a reliable chain. It was narrated by Abu Hurayrah and recorded by the following: Ibn Ḥibbân, no. 3119; al-Bayhaqi, *Ithbât ‘Adhâb al-Qabr*, no. 57; al-Ḥâkim, 1:381. See as-Suyooṭi, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 5:607.

184 The hadiths regarding al-Ḥawḍ are abundant. They have been collected separately by several scholars, one of whom is al-Ḥâfidh Baqi ibn Makhlad al-Andaloosi. His treatise on this is printed.

Al-Ḥawḍ or ‘the Basin’ is a fountain that will be gifted to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) on the Day of Judgement. It is filled with the water of *al-Kawthar*, a river which originates from within paradise. See the interpretation of Soorat al-Kawthar *(108)*. (Translator)

185 Compare this with al-‘Irâqi, *Takhreej al-Iḥyâ'*, 4:19; al-‘Ajlooni, *Kashf al-Khifâ'*, 1:491; al-Harawi, *al-Asrâr al-Marfoo‘ah*, no. 199.

186 Since predatory is a distinct category already covered, animalistic here refers to docile animals of livestock in particular, like sheep and cattle. They live following the herd, concerned solely with comfort, consumption, and instant carnal gratification. (Translator)

187 ﴿Do not touch the orphan's property, before he comes of age, except to improve it…﴾ *(al-An‘âm 6: 152; al-Isrâ' 17: 34)*

188 Some of the sins mentioned at the beginning of Soorat an-Nisâ' *(an-Nisâ' 4: 1-31)* include unjustly consuming the wealth or property of orphans or other people, committing unlawful sexual intercourse, marrying women whom one's fathers married, and killing oneself or other people. (Editor)

189 Readers are advised to read the related fiqh rulings on these matters. (Editor)

190 Linguistically, ta‘ṭeel comes from *‘aṭṭala* which means to empty or vacate. In the discipline of Islamic theology, it refers to partially or fully suspending the attributes of Allah. (Translator)

191 This rebuts the allegation that some have unfairly made against Shaykh al-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah and his student Ibn al-Qayyim namely that they consider the universe eternal and not temporally originated. *Subḥân Allâh*! This is certainly a great slander.

192 The Jahmites were the followers of Jahm ibn Ṣafwân Abu Muhriz (died 745 CE), a controversial and radical heretic who taught that Allah has no attributes. He claimed that faith is merely having knowledge that Allah exists.

As-Sunna Foundation of America, “The Jahmiyya,” accessed November 11, 2013, http://www.sunnah.org/aqida/alashaira4.htm.

The Qarmatians (Karmatians) were named after their founder Hamdan Qarmaṭ. They were from a Shiite Muslim sect known as Ishmaelites (Ismailia), and they flourished in Iraq, Bahrain, and Yemen from 9th-11th century. Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Qarmatian,"

http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/485509/Qarmatian. (Editor)

193 The Magians were an ancient religious group who worshipped fire. They originated in Persia several centuries before the time of Jesus. See *(al-Ḥajj 22: 17).* (Editor)

194 The Qadarites were a movement in early Islam, in 7th century CE. They opposed the Umayyad caliphs. They also believed in the notion of free will. (They should not be confused with a Sufi order of similar name, the Qadariyah, founded in 12th century CE.) (Editor)

195 It was confirmed that the Prophet (ﷺ) said about them:

«The Qadarites are the Magians of this Ummah.»

This hadith is authentic due to its corroborating chains of narration.

196 See *(al-Baqarah 2: 258).* (Editor)

197 Polytheistic Sabeans worshipped the planets and stars. The Qur'an *(al-Baqarah 2: 62)* and *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 69)* mentions other 'Sabeans' who appear to have believed in Allah and the Last Day. (Editor)

198 It also has a corroborating report. It was recorded by Aḥmad and aṭ-Ṭabarâni in *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* and *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* as mentioned by al-Haythami with a chain of trustworthy narrators, except for someone whom only Ibn Ḥibbân considered trustworthy. Al-Haythami, *Majma' az-Zawâ'id*, 10:223.

199 See *al-'Uboodiyah* by Shaykh al-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah.

200 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 118.

201 See *Tajreed at-Tawḥeed al-Mufeed* with my commentary. al-Maqreezi, *Tajreed at-Tawḥeed al-Mufeed*, 26-27.

202 The hadith concerning this is not authentic. It was recorded by al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi in *Târeekh Baghdâd*, Ibn al-Jawzi in *al-'Ilal al-Mutanâhiyah*, and by Ibn 'Adiy in *al-Kâmil* from Jâbir with a chain containing Is-ḥâq ibn Bishr al-Kâhili who is matrook.

There are other chains for it both mawqoof and marfoo', but they are also weak. You can review them and the criticism on them in *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aḍ-Ḍa'eefah*, no. 224.

203 This is abridged from the *mu'allaqât* (suspended narrations) of Bukhari, 13:14. Its complete text was narrated by 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood, and it has a reliable chain. It

was recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Khuzaymah, and Ibn Ḥibbân.

204 Bukhari and Muslim recorded a version whose wording is similar to the one narrated by ‘Â’ishah.

205 The translation of this Qur’anic verse is from Saheeh International.

206 According to al-Haythami, its chain contains a narrator who was considered trustworthy by Aḥmad, but weak by others. It also contains al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri who did not clarify who he heard it from.

207 This is almost an exact quote from the verse in al-Baqarah but is not recognized as such in translation. (Translator)

208 Tashbeeh comes from *shabbaha* which means to resemble or deem things similar. In the science of ‘aqeedah, it refers to likening Allah to His creation. (Translator)

209 Harm and benefit does not mean that people themselves cannot ‘harm’ or ‘benefit’ others; it means that their actions will only result in harm or benefit if Allah ultimately allows it. For example, Allah allows medicine to work for some people but not for others. (Editor)

210 Refer to the four types of love mentioned earlier in this text. (Translator)

211 This does not mean that we cannot indirectly ‘rely’ on someone in day-to-day affairs. It means keeping in mind that Allah is ultimately in control. (Editor)

212 Here, ﴿due recognition﴾ means they have not assessed Him with the assessment due to Him, meaning they have not taken into account His perfect attributes.

213 Ar-Rooḥ literally means soul or spirit, but here it refers to Angel Jibreel. (Translator)

214 Grasping the forelock is an Arabic idiom, referring to a horse’s forelock. The one who grasps it has power over the horse. Likewise, Allah effectively ‘grasps the forelock’ of the human being, meaning He has complete control over the person. See *(Hood 11: 56)*. (Editor)

215 al-Ash‘ari, *al-Ibânah*, 7-8.

216 Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ijtimâ‘ al-Juyoosh al-Islâmiyah*, 286-299.

217 Ibn al-Ja‘d, *Musnad Ibn al-Ja‘d*, no. 1885.

218 al-Albâni, *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, no. 281.

219 See *(al-Baqarah 2: 178-179).* (Editor)

220 Compare with al-Albâni, *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aḍ-Ḍa‘eefah*, no. 1039.

221 See *(al-Baqarah 2: 178-179).* (Editor)

222 'Our Shaykh' here means Shaykh al-Islâm Ibn Taymiyah, the teacher of Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah bestow mercy upon him.

223 The other report is a hadith recorded by Ibn Ḥibbân, Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhi, and al-Bayhaqi with an authentic chain of narration.

224 This wording was recorded by at-Tirmidhi from Abu Ayyoob al-Anṣâri, and by Aḥmad from Ubayy ibn Ka'b. It was recorded with a similar wording by Bukhari from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, and by Muslim from Abu Hurayrah.

225 at-Tirmidhi mentions that this narration is reliable. It was also recorded by al-Baghawi (13:104) with a reliable chain of narration.

226 Bukhari, *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhâri*, no. 6733; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ al-Bâri*, 13:130.

227 Let those tyrants who rule some Muslim lands with an iron fist fear Allah and cease their oppression, torture, and abuse.

﴿Their only grievance against them was that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy.﴾ *(al-Burooj 85: 8)*

228 Bukhari, *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhâri*, no. 3849.

229 The version of the hadith mentioned by the author was narrated by Ḥudhayfah, and recorded by al-Ḥâkim, al-Quḍâ'i, and Ibn al-Jawzi. Its chain contains 'Abdur-Raḥmân al-Wâsiṭi who was considered weak, as mentioned by adh-Dhahabi.

230 It was deemed defective by al-Haythami and al-Mundhiri due to the disconnection between al-Muṭṭalib ibn 'Abdullâh and 'Ubâdah. It has a supporting report with a reliable chain collected by al-Ḥâkim, Abu Ya'lâ, and al-Kharâ'iṭi, attributed to Anas.

231 This is a profound point that deserves deep consideration.

232 Compare with: al-'Irâqi, *Takhreej al-Iḥyâ'*, 1:159; az-Zabeedi, *Ittiḥâf as-Sâdat al-Muttaqeen*, 3:112.

233 Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 10:63.

234 These individuals should fear Allah. They should also know that even if they themselves are virtuous, their tongues that lash away at the honour of the masses will bring about their destruction unless they hasten to rescue themselves through repentance.

235 This refers to 'Alqamah ibn Waqqâṣ who narrated this hadith from Bilâl.

236 The point of reference in the hadith has a corroborating report from Ka'b ibn 'Ujrah. It was recorded by Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni as

mentioned in *al-Iṣâbah*, 8:288. Its chain contains Aḥmad ibn ‘Eesâ who is closer to being weak, but qualifies to make the hadith reliable.

237 Abu Ya‘lâ, *Musnad*, no. 5; Ibn as-Sunni, *‘Amâl al-Yawm wal-Laylah*, no. 7; Ibn Abi ad-Dunyâ, *aṣ-Ṣamt*, no. 13; Ibn Aḥmad, *Zawâ’id az-Zuhd*, no. 112. Others also recorded it with an authentic chain of narration.

238 Bukhari, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, no. 294.

239 Abu Ya‘lâ, *Musnad*, no. 4981; aṭ-Ṭabarâni, *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabeer*, no. 10329. (Editor)

240 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 1:180. (Editor)

241 This statement must be understood in harmony with other revealed texts (Qur’an and Sunnah) which explicitly establish free will, individual accountability, and that no person carries the sin of another. Reconciling these notions with ‘illegitimate children being bound for doom’ remains possible by understanding this to mean Allah causes those He knows will ultimately choose misguidance to be born from illicit acts. The language of this hadith should not be assumed absolute in its implications, which means there will certainly be exceptions to this ‘destiny of those born out of wedlock’ phenomenon. After all, the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: «Hajj is ‘Arafah» (An authentic hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi) does not mean that Hajj is nothing but ‘Arafah. Finally, reconciliation is only necessary if this hadith is authentically transmitted and that is a contentious debate between scholars of Hadith. (Translator)

242 Imam Abu Ja‘far aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi has another response. Aṭ-Ṭaḥâwi, *Mushkil al-Âthâr*, 1:395; Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Manâr al-Muneef*, 133.

243 al-Ḥamawi, *Mu‘jam al-Buldân*, 2:298.

244 Aḥmad, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, 1:65.

245 al-Ishbeeli, *Kitâb al-‘Âqibah*.

246 al-Âjurri, *Taḥreem al-Liwâṭ*, no. 29; al-Bayhaqi, *as-Sunan*, 8:232; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallâ bil-Âthâr*, 11:380.

247 ad-Doori, *Dham al-Liwâṭ*, no. 48; al-Âjurri, *Taḥreem al-Liwâṭ*, no. 30; Ibn Abi Shaybah, *Kitâb al-Muṣannaf*, 9:529; al-Bayhaqi, 8:232.

248 al-Âjurri, *Taḥreem al-Liwâṭ*, no. 26, 27. It was also authenticated by the author Ibn al-Qayyim in *Zâd al-Ma‘âd*, 5:40.

249 Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) is reminding Moosâ that he had slain an Egyptian. Moosâ had done this accidentally in defence of one of his own people who was fighting the Egyptian. Moosâ then turned to Allah in repentance. See *(al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 15-17).* (Editor)

250 This was recorded from Anas. Aḥmad, *Musnad*, 3:158, 245; Sa‘eed ibn Manṣoor, *Sunan*, no. 490; Ibn Ḥibbân, no. 4028; al-Bayhaqi, 7:81-82; aṭ-Ṭabarâni, *al-Mu‘jam al-*

*Awsaṭ*, (no. 2235 in al-Haythami, *Kitâb Majma‘ al-Baḥrayn*). It contains weakness, but has corroborating reports authenticating it, which were alluded to by Shaykh al-Albâni in *Âdâb az-Zafâf*, 133.

251 ‘We saved him’ refers to Prophet Looṭ (and his family, except his wife). (Editor)

252 ‘My daughters’ refers to the women of his community who were available for marriage.

253 The translation of this verse is from Saheeh International.

254 Some manuscripts of this book do not include this narration, which was not found in the *Sunan* of Abu Dâwood.

255 Al-Haythami indicates that it contains Rifdah ibn Quḍâ‘ah who was deemed trustworthy by Hishâm ibn ‘Ammâr but considered weak by the majority.

Note: The name ‘Abdullâh ibn Abi Muṭarrif is incorrect. The correct name is ‘Abdullâh ibn Muṭarrif as noted by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim according to his father (Abu Ḥâtim ar-Râzi). Ibn Abi Ḥâtim, *al-Jarḥ wat-Ta‘deel*, 2:215. This concurs with *Awhâm al-Jam‘ wat-Tafreeq*, and it was not found in *al-Muwaḍḍiḥ* by al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi.

256 The second view is that the legislative punishment is not obligatory.

257 It has been authenticated, as previously established. Ibn Ḥajar, *at-Talkheeṣ al-Ḥabeer*, 4:55; al-Haythami, *Majma‘ az-Zawâ’id*, 6:274.

258 He was one of the companions of Imam Aḥmad (d. 230 AH).

259 Refer to the original question asked at the beginning of this book and to the similar hadith recorded by Bukhari that the author quotes in his response. (Editor)

260 Ibn al-Qayyim, *Mawârid al-Amân*, 102.

261 The translation of this verse is from Saheeh International.

262 Good words will not be accepted and will not ascend to heaven unless they are accompanied by righteous deeds that confirm them.

263 This is from a *marfoo‘* report from al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib. Ibn al-Qayyim, *Mawârid al-Amân*, 105-106.

264 Ibn al-Qayyim, *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbeen*, 16; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Mawârid al-Amân*, 104.

265 This reminder is excellent and refutes some Sufi writers who frequently use it regarding Allah.

266 al-Ḥâfidh al-‘Iraqi states:

> I did not find any basis for it, except that the author of *Musnad al-Firdaws* collected it from the hadith of Abu ad-Dardâ', but his son did not mention a chain for it in *Kitâb Firdaws al-Akhbâr*, 5:8126.

al-'Iraqi, *Takhreej al-Iḥyâ'*, 3:8.

267 This meaning is found in a confirmed hadith, narrated by Ibn 'Umar and collected by Ibn Abi 'Âṣim and al-Ḥâkim an-Naysâboori. Ibn Abi 'Âṣim, *az-Zuhd*, no. 166; al-Ḥâkim, *al-Mustadrak*, 2:443 and 4:328. It has an authentic chain of narration.

268 The part between the brackets is not in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhâri*. Our Shaykh al-Albâni states:

> I did not find this addition in Bukhari or any other collector. Al-Ḥâfidh Ibn Ḥajar mentions it in *Fatḥ al-Bâri* [11:344] in connection with aṭ-Ṭoofi, while explaining the hadith, but he did not reference it to anyone.

al-Albâni, *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4:191; Ibn Taymiyah, *Fatâwâ Shaykh al-Islâm*, 5:511, 10:58-59 and 18:129-131.

269 The linguistic nuance being explored here surrounds the Arabic wording of this hadith *qudsi* (a hadith communicated to Prophet Muhammad [ﷺ] by Allah). In Arabic, the letter *bâ'* is used to state '**by** Allah they hear, see, strike, and walk' and the letter *lâm* is used to state '**for** Allah they hear, see, strike, and walk'. The author explains what this letter *bâ'* correctly indicates here, as it has multiple usages in the Arabic language. (Translator)

270 Bukhari cites this version as a mu'allaq report in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, and references its complete chain in *Khalq Af'âl al-'Ibâd*, no. 436.

271 Gheerah (protective jealousy) is an established trait of Allah, as mentioned in numerous authentic hadiths. Of course, like all the qualities of Allah, they must be understood in a manner that is befitting of His majesty and transcendence, part of which is it being a perfect quality that we can never fully understand because of our finite nature as humans. (Translator)

272 «'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ asked the Prophet (ﷺ): Who is the most beloved person to you?

He replied: 'Â'ishah.

He enquired: And from the men?

He replied: Her father.» (Bukhari)

273 Al-Wali is one of the beautiful names of Allah, which means the Protector, or the Ally; al-Ḥameed is another beautiful name of Allah, which means the Most Praiseworthy.

Wilâyah is the state of allegiance or nearness. In spirituality, it refers to the concept of sainthood when attributed to a person. Many religions and sects mistakenly confine it

to toiling with physical labour, and thus the author makes a point to correctly define it here. (Translator)

274 An Arabic proverb for a person who endures difficulty in order to attain comfort. Al-Maydâni, *Majma‘ al-Amthâl*, 2:3.

275 Taken from a hadith narrated by Mu‘âdh with a chain that is potentially sound. It was recorded by al-Ḥâkim, Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, and aṭ-Ṭabarâni in *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabeer*. Ibn Ḥibbân recorded a corroborating report from Abu Hurayrah, which has a good chain of narration.

276 Abu Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ’*, 2:96; Ibn Khuzaymah, *Kitâb at-Tawḥeed*, 328; Ibn al-Bannâ’, *Faḍl at-Tahleel*, no. 1.

277 The translation of these verses is from Saheeh International.

278 Ibn al-Qayyim, *at-Tibyân.*

279 Recorded with similar wording by aṭ-Ṭabari, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Ḥâtim, and Ibn Mardawayh as mentioned in as-Suyooṭi, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 8:243; Ibn Katheer, *Tafseer al-Qur’ân al-‘Adheem*, 8:214.

280 An example is a gunshot wound, which necessitates the presence of a gunshot. However, a gunshot does not always result in a gunshot wound. (Editor)

281 ‘Adoration of an image’ refers to the harms of being infatuated with the mental image of a person (normally, though not always, someone unattainable). (Editor)

282 ‘Ishq translates into various English terms depending on the circumstances, none of which capture the exact meaning of the Arabic. These include (excessive) adoration, love, excessive love, infatuation, passion, lust, longing, craving, obsession, and attraction. The Arabic has been retained as none of the English terms satisfactorily fit the context. (Editor)

283 It was not found in the printed version of *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, and the statement in the end «I can patiently keep away from food and drink, but I cannot patiently keep away from them» was only narrated by Aḥmad via Yoosuf ibn ‘Aṭiyah aṣ-Ṣaffâr who is matrook.

Without the addition, the hadith is confirmed authentic. Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, 3:128, 199, and 285; an-Nasâ’i, *Sunan*, no. 3939; *Kitâb ‘Ishrat an-Nisâ’*, no. 1 and no. 2; al-Bayhaqi, 7:78. It has many other chains from both Thâbit and Anas.

Its chain was deemed reliable by al-Ḥâfidh Ibn Ḥajar. Ibn Ḥajar, *at-Talkheeṣ al-Ḥabeer*, 3:116; as-Sakhâwi, *al-Maqâṣid al-Ḥasanah*, 299; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zâd al-Ma‘âd*, 4:250.

284 See Ibn al-Qayyim and al-Ḥasâni, *Shifâ’ al-‘Aleel*, 400-434; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Badâ’i‘ al-Fawâ’id*, 1:19; *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbeen*, 342-345. Also, compare this with: Abu Zayd, *Ibn al-Qayyim*, 295.

285 Referring to al-Mutanabbi! See his *Deewân* and the commentary of its verifier about it. al-Mutanabbi, *Deewân*, 2:40.

286 Majnoon means insane. Majnoon Laylâ was an infamous Arab poet who was madly in love with a girl named Laylâ. He left behind multitudes of poems about his lifelong quest to reunite with her. (Translator)

287 This is one of the important fundamental principles when inviting people to worship and believe in Allah.

288 al-Maydâni, *Majma' al-Amthâl*, 2:414.

This aphorism is said about those who fall foul of their own wrongdoing. It is based on a person who inflated a water skin and tied it, then went to swim in a river with it. The skin was weakly tied, so its air leaked. On the verge of drowning, the person screamed out to a person standing on the shore who responded, "Your hands tied, and your mouth blew," meaning that you are the one who inflated and fastened it, so blame no one but yourself. (Translator)

289 Here 'beloved wife' refers to 'Â'ishah who was inadvertently left behind when travelling with the Prophet (ﷺ) on an expedition because she was searching for a missing necklace. Ṣafwân ibn al-Mu'aṭṭil later found her and brought her back after which false and slanderous rumours began to spread. (Editor)

290 The hadith regarding false rumours about 'Â'ishah is recorded by Bukhari and Muslim. A number of scholars like al-Âjurri and others have recorded it in separate works. al-Âjurri, *Juz' Ibn Deezeel*, no. 3.

291 The reference for the related hadith and an explanation about its weakness has already been given. Of course, the intermediary is guilty of sin for aiding the payer and consumer of bribes.

292 al-Ishbeeli, *Kitâb al-'Âqibah*. (Editor)

293 Everything mentioned in this section comprises the points of the objectors and the incidents and hadiths they quote. The author will briefly respond to all these in the next section. It should be noted that the author's mention of these reports does not imply his acceptance or rejection of them, as that discussion is beyond the scope of evaluating 'ishq and its effect on the heart. (Translator)

294 This section is abridged from the original Arabic edition. (Editor)

295 This – and similar reports that follow – indicates what these righteous men from the elites of this Ummah are beyond falling into because Allah granted them pure souls, clean interiors, and brilliant hearts that were fixed upon exalting Allah and following His Messenger (ﷺ) – and Allah alone guides to the straight path.

296 adh-Dhâhiri (died 297 AH). See his biography: Ibn Katheer, *al-Bidâyah wan-Nihâyah*, 11:110-111; *Ṭabaqât al-Fuqahâ'*, 175-176. Adh-Dhahabi mentions, "He had full

insight into hadiths and the statements of the Companions, but he would perform *ijtihâd* [juristic deduction] and not imitate anyone." Adh-Dhahabi, *Sayr A'lâm an-Nubalâ'*, 13:109.

297 al-Khaṭeeb al-Baghdâdi, *Târeekh Baghdâd*, 5:262.

298 See adh-Dhahabi, *Sayr A'lâm an-Nubalâ'*, 13:115.

299 adh-Dhâhiri, *az-Zahrah.*

300 The quotations of this lover are lengthy poetic monologues. They are paraphrased here for the greater benefit of the reader. This way, historical references and colloquial maxims are not required to understand the intended illustration meant by this narration. (Translator)

301 Al-Firdaws is the highest level of paradise. See *(al-Kahf 18: 107)* and *(al-Mu'minoon 23: 11).* (Editor)

302 This refers to two men from 'Anazah. They journeyed in search of leather skins but never returned. It became symbolic of being lost forever. al-Muḥibbi, *Janâ al-Jannatayn*, 89.

303 She was a poet from the age of the Umayyads. Her story is mentioned by Zaynab Fawwâz in *Kitâb ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 213.

304 A mithqâl is equivalent to 4.25 grams. (Translator)

305 A howdah is a covered carriage, which is put on the back of an animal such as a camel or an elephant, usually for carrying ladies or noble people. (Editor)

306 This statement is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

307 Ibn Sa'd, *aṭ-Ṭabaqât al-Kubrâ*, 8:101-102; al-Ḥâkim, 4:23. Both are narrated through al-Wâqidi who is matrook; some have even considered him a liar.

The author dissects this report with a brilliant discussion in another of his books. See: Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zâd al-Ma'âd*, 4:266-267. Also see: Ibn al-'Arabi, *Aḥkâm al-Qur'ân*, 3:1530; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ al-Bâri*, 8:404.

308 This is a false report. Ibn al-Jawzi, *al-Mawḍoo'ât*, 2:267; ash-Shawkâni, *al-Fawâ'id al-Majmoo'ah*, no. 126.

309 Compare this with Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣâbah*, 4:360.

310 Compare this with *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbeen* by the author. Ibn al-Qayyim, *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbeen*, 198.

311 This meaning is correct though the hadith alluding to it is not authentic. al-Albâni, *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aḍ-Ḍa'eefah*, no. 600.

312 This narration seems to be among the unfounded narrations of the Children of Israel. Its reference was not found.

313 The author intends that the currency of this world, namely good deeds, is rewarded for more than its worth in this world and the hereafter, while evil is only recompensed for its worth – not compounded in same fashion. (Translator)

314 An authentic hadith about this is narrated by Anas and recorded by Muslim. It is abridged in Bukhari, and this subject has been narrated by a number of Companions.

315 See *(al-Baqarah 2: 255).*

316 Advisor here refers to a believing man from Fir'awn's own people who advised them to stop following the falsehood of Fir'awn and to follow the truth Prophet Moosâ was preaching, which leads to salvation. See *(Ghâfir 40: 28-35).* (Editor)

317 It was not found in the printed version of the book, *as-Sunnah*, by 'Abdullâh ibn Aḥmad. It has been recorded by ar-Râfi'i but the chain includes Ismâ'eel ibn Râfi'i who has a weak memory. ar-Râfi'i, *at-Tadween fee Târeekh Qazween*, 2:304; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ḥâdi al-Arwâḥ*, 241.

318 *Khâtama* means to seal and khatmah refers to the recitation of the entire Qur'an from beginning to end. (Translator)

319 ath-Thawri, *Tafseer Sufyân ath-Thawri*, 93; aṭ-Ṭabari, *Jâmi' al-Bayân*, 5:19; Abu Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyâ'*, 4:12; as-Suyooṭi, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, 2:143.

320 A group of scholars have alluded to the fact that this addition to the narration is baseless. Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Kâfî ash-Shâfi*, no. 229; Bayḍâwi, *al-Fatḥ as-Samâwi*, no. 275; at-Tabrayzi, *Mishkât al-Maṣâbeeḥ*, 1:1448.

321 Recorded by Muslim with the wording 'ninety'. It was collected by Bukhari with the wording 'a hundred'.

322 Referring to the Prophet (ﷺ) as stated by al-Qâḍi 'Iyâḍ. 'Iyâḍ, *ash-Shifâ'*, 1:190. This was recorded by Bukhari in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, no. 5069.

323 Perhaps this is of the narrations of (the Shiite) ash-Shareef ar-Riḍâ or Abul-Faraj al-Iṣfahâni.

324 Muzdalifah is a valley between Mina and 'Arafah, where Hajj pilgrims spend the night in the open after spending the afternoon praying at 'Arafah on the 9th of Dhul-Ḥijjah. See also *(al-Baqarah 2: 198).* (Editor)

325 az-Zamakhshari, *Rabee' al-Abrâr.*

326 Perform janâzah (the funeral prayer) upon it. This means that there is little hope for the carnal self in this state, so one might as well perform the funeral prayer for it, which includes making takbeer (repeating *Allâhu akbar*). (Editor)

327 *Ḥafiḏha* means to memorize. In Hadith terminology, the ḥuffâḏh are the highest-ranking scholars in that field; those who memorize hundreds of thousands of hadiths with utmost precision. (Translator)

328 Ibn ‘Adiy, *al-Kâmil*, 3:1263.

329 Ibn Ṭâhir, *Kitâb Ma‘rifat at-Tadhkirah*, no. 842.

330 It is not in the version of *al-Mawḍoo‘ât* by Ibn al-Jawzi consulted. Perhaps it was included in another manuscript. It is in *al-Wâhiyât*. Ibn al-Jawzi, *al-Wâhiyât*, no. 285.

331 Ibn al-Jawzi, *al-‘Ilal al-Mutanâhiyah*, no. 1288.

332 al-Kharâ’iṭi, *I‘tilâl al-Quloob*. It has previously been mentioned.

333 Ibn al-Jawzi, *Kitâb aḍ-Ḍu‘afâ’*, 3:46. Shaykh al-Albâni mentions two issues here concerning the author’s words. Firstly, al-Kharâ’iṭi was not accused of being weak. Secondly, Ibn al-Jawzi did not mention al-Kharâ’iṭi in his book *aḍ-Ḍu‘afâ’*. He mentioned others so do review it. Al-Albâni, *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aḍ-Ḍa‘eefah*, 1:589-590.

334 Ibn al-Qaysarâni, *Tadhkirat al-Mawḍoo‘ât*, no. 842. It was previously mentioned.

335 The author himself indicates, “Its authenticity as a mawqoof report about Ibn ‘Abbâs is questionable.” Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zâd al-Ma‘âd*, 3:306.

336 Compare with Ibn Ḥazm, *Ṭawq al-Ḥamâmah*, 1:257.

337 See the hadiths collected about this in the following: as-Suyooṭi, *Abwâb as-Sa‘âdah*; al-Albâni, *Aḥkâm al-Janâ’iz*, 58-59.

338 See the author discuss this hadith further, and clarify why it is not authentic in: Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Manâr al-Muneef*, 63; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbeen*, 180; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zâd al-Ma‘âd*, 3:306-307.

339 This final paragraph is from the transcriber of the original manuscript.

340 For example, in the First book of Samuel 15: 1-3, Samuel said to Saul:

> 1 I am the one the LORD sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from the LORD. 2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. 3 Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.

According to Deuteronomy 20:10-18, God said:

> 10 When you march up to attack a city, make its people an offer of peace. 11 If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be subject to forced labor and shall

work for you. 12 If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. 13 When the LORD your God delivers it into your hand, put to the sword all the men in it. 14 As for the women, the children, the livestock and everything else in the city, you may take these as plunder for yourselves. And you may use the plunder the LORD your God gives you from your enemies. 15 This is how you are to treat all the cities that are at a distance from you and do not belong to the nations nearby. 16 However, in the cities of the nations the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. 17 Completely destroy them – the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites – as the LORD your God has commanded you. 18 Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God.

In Numbers 31:17-18, Moosâ said, "17 Now kill all the boys. And kill every woman who has slept with a man, 18 but save for yourselves every girl who has never slept with a man."

And in Joshua 6: 21, "They devoted the city to the LORD and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it-men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys."

341 *Majmoo' al-Fatâwâ*, 24:69.

342 See al-Kâsâni, *Badâ'i' aṣ-Ṣanâ'i'*, 6:77.

343 See Ibn al-Qayyim, *Aḥkam Ahl adh-Dhimmah* (Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2002), 1:336-344.

344 See Muhammad ibn Idrees ash-Shâfi'i, *al-Umm* (Cairo: Dâr al-Fikr, 1961), 4:110.

345 See Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State*, (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Publishers, Booksellers, and Exporters, 1987), 293.

346 S. H. Leeder, *Veiled Mysteries of Egypt and the Religion of Islam* (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1913), 332.

347 Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World* (New York: New Amsterdam, 1989), 7.

348 Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization: Vol. 4, The Age of Faith* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950).

349 C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), 129.

350 Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, 19.

351 Durant, *The Story of Civilization: Vol. 4, The Age of Faith*, 209.

352 H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers, ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, vol. 1 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 35.

[353] Christian Cherfils, *Bonaparte et l'Islam d'après les Documents Français & Arabes* (Paris: Libraire de la Cour d'Appel et de l'Ordre des Avocats, 1914), 124

[354] The Arabic words are transliterated according to the conventions of the Transliteration Chart found in this book. If a word has become part of the English language (that is, is found in a dictionary of Standard English), that spelling is used in this book and appears first in this Glossary, with the transliterated form in brackets after it.